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We're talking to you, Tod Gordon!

Next issue on sale December 15, 1998

YOUR Letters

BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES

I just had to write you a letter to let you know how much I appreciated the "Spotlight" you guys did on Junkyard Dog (November 1998). I think that overlooking a legend such as JYD, like other wrestling magazines did, shows a real lack of class. Not only do I think THE WRESTLER should be commended for acknowledging his death, but the "Spotlight" you did was wonderful.

We hear a lot about Hogan, Flair, and Roddy Piper being legends, but Junkyard Dog was a legend, too. I even found out that he'd

held a couple of titles I never knew he held.

Unlike Lex Luger and Bret Hart, Junkyard Dog didn't go back and forth between being a rulebreaker and a fan favorite. JYD was a fan favorite right up until his death, but he was also hardcore. Even when he lost, he never made excuses. He was one tough cookie, and he will be missed. I am holding on to your "Spotlight" on Junkyard Dog as a keepsake. Thanks a lot!

MACK SCOTT
Seattle, WA

I am writing to commend you for placing the "Spotlight" on the late Junkyard Dog in the November 1998 issue. I am a fan of your fine publication and always read the "Introducing" and "Spotlight" sections thoroughly, but something was special about this particular "Spotlight."

I first became a wrestling fan at the tender age of 10, and it was around that time that I was introduced to JYD, courtesy of WWF television (circa 1987). The Dog's pre-WWF wrestling career was nothing but a huge question mark to me ... until now.

Thanks to the November "Spotlight," I became well-informed on the career of a man who defined sportsmanship, hard work, and heroism. I was lucky enough to see him in person (though not in action) when he was honored at ECW's Wrestlepalooza '98 pay-



Hacksaw Duggan recently underwent surgery to remove a cancerous kidney. The staff at THE WRESTLER, as well as reader Randy Travis and millions of fans worldwide, wish Duggan a speedy recovery.

per-view as a hardcore legend. I didn't know then, but I know now why he deserved that honor as much as anyone. He was hit in the face with a toxic substance and continued to wrestle blind when a lesser man would have faced an extended hospital stay.

Farewell to a hardcore legend. Rest in peace, "Big Thump."

BRANDON LEAGUE
Carrollton, GA

THINKING OF HACKSAW

I am writing to you because I would like to wish Jim Duggan the



Our "Spotlight" feature on Junkyard Dog was a big hit with several readers. Even after his tragic death—the love affair between JYD and his fans endures.



X-Pac beat Jeff Jarrett in a hair vs. hair match at SummerSlam, but "Double-J" left the arena with most of his hair anyway. Reader Ashley Brant was not happy that this was allowed to happen.

best of luck as he recovers from cancer surgery. Duggan has been my favorite wrestler for almost 20 years. When he made that impassioned speech on *Thunder*, I got very emotional. It takes a big man to admit his fears on national television. Jim Duggan is a winner. He has always been one, and I am sure he will rise above this problem the same way he overcame other obstacles throughout his career. Good luck, Jim.

RANDY TRAVIS
Macon, GA

TONE DOWN THE HYPE

I can't understand why The Edge is being hyped so much by Jim Ross and the WWF. He seems to have a lot of talent, but he still has a lot to prove. It seems like his favorite things to do are sneak-attack people from the crowd and interfere in other people's matches. He hasn't beaten many quality opponents yet and didn't look that good against

Gangrel in a match in September. Why is he so angry, anyway? If I hear Ross call The Edge an "enigma" one more time, I think I'll puke.

TIMOTHY DUNN
Willow Grove, PA

OH THE HYPOCRISY

Steve Anderson makes several great points in his "No Holds Barred" column (November 1998) about the ridiculous hypocrisy that exists in professional wrestling today. I'm sure if Anderson cared to do so, he could point out thousands of inconsistencies in both the WWF and WCW, as they occur on a

weekly basis, but he just pointed out the most infamous examples.

I think the most disappointing example of this behavior occurred at SummerSlam '98. X-Pac beat Jeff Jarrett in what was billed as a hair vs. hair match. But after the match, X-Pac let Jarrett go after cutting off very little hair. All Jarrett received was a trim. Any veteran wrestling fan expects the loser to have his head shaved clean in a hair match. I ordered the pay-per-view, believe it or not, to see one of these guys get their head shaved. I feel ripped off. Now I understand how those people who expected Vader to wrestle without a mask or expected to see Kevin Nash and Sting defend the title feel.

ASHLEY BRANT
St. Paul, MN

WHAT DID HE SAY?

I have a question for all those WCW fans who cheer The Warrior. Wasn't one face-painted geek who

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WHAT'S

Happëning

By Bill Apter

AT ONE POINT several years ago, **Eric Bischoff** was content to let WCW/NWO wrestlers appear on cards in Japan under the banner of New Japan Pro Wrestling. Today, the power-hungry Bischoff is intent on taking over the company.

"By the time your readers have this little magazine in front of them, I should be sitting behind *my* desk in *my* magnificent office in Tokyo as the new head of New Japan," Bischoff said. "Come to think of it, the name New Japan just won't cut it any longer. I'll change it to New

Hollywood International Pro Wrestling. Now *that* sounds great."

Bischoff's attempt at conquering New Japan got off to a very rocky start. He signed **Chris Jericho** and **Eddy Guerrero** (wrestling under a mask as **Black Tiger**) to wrestle IWGP junior tag team champions **Tatsuhito Takaiwa** and **Shinjiro Otani**. But since Guerrero despises Bischoff, he wanted no part of the match. He agreed to take it, though, when Bischoff threatened to terminate his contract if he didn't. After 19 minutes 32 seconds,

Otani used a dragon suplex to pin Guerrero.

"I am not the least bit annoyed," a non-convincing Bischoff told reporters after the match. "Guerrero put no effort into the match and just made matters worse for himself. But if had to depend on one man—particularly him—to get my goals accomplished, I wouldn't be in the position I am today."

Bischoff's luck changed for the better later in the evening, when **Scott Norton** won the vacant IWGP heavyweight title from **Yuji Nagata**. **Masa Chono** was originally scheduled to defend the belt



So much for the good relationship between New Japan Pro Wrestling President Selji Sakaguchi and Eric Bischoff. Bischoff no longer wants to work together with Sakaguchi; he wants to take over his company.



What's this—the *friendly* Rocky Maivia? WWF fans have been acting a lot more friendly toward "The Rock" since he formed an alliance with Ken Shamrock and Mankind.

European champ this time around. "I'm negotiating with promoters all over Europe," he said. "I'll wrestle there any time. He didn't do that even once" ... 911 has returned to ECW. Unfortunately for him, his first match back was memorable for the wrong reason. **Spike Dudley**, who at 5'7", 155 pounds is about 17 inches shorter and 150 pounds lighter than 911, beat him in less than a

minute. Dudley is establishing quite a reputation for being a

Just call him Spike Dudley the giant killer! Sal E. Graziano is one of a number of super heavyweights to go down to Spike in ECW in recent months.

"giant killer." He also defeated super heavyweights **Sal E. Graziano** and **Ulf Hermann** in recent weeks. His method is simple. He'll usually just kick his opponent in the groin, then finish him off with an "Acid Drop" (bulldog headlock) from the top rope.

(Continued on page 51)



on the card, but due to a serious neck injury, he was forced to give up the belt. Norton and Nagata were the two top contenders at the time. Also that night, **NWO Sting** and **Brian Adams** lost in their bid to unseat **Genichiro Tenryu** and **Shiro Koshinaka** as IWGP tag team champs.

"Look at what I did," Bischoff gloated before the assembled media. "Mr. Bischoff has ownership of your IWGP title. I never fail at anything I do, and your tag team title will be mine next."

It's hard to believe, but **Rocky Maivia**, better known as "The Rock," may be on the verge of becoming exactly what he has long professed and hoped to be: "The People's Champ." Since "The Rock" has been allied with **Ken Shamrock** and **Mankind**, the chants of "Rocky sucks!" have virtually stopped. "The Rock" has been The People's Champion since he started his career, but the people are just starting to smarten up to that," Maivia says.

D-Lo Brown told me that unlike his predecessor, **X-Pac**, he intends to be a fighting WWF

Steve Anderson's View



NO Holds Barred

with Steve Anderson

THIS COLUMN IS about two men in two separate (and very serious) real-life situations: a "Nature Boy" and a "Hacksaw." One man is fighting for his career. The other man is fighting for his life.

"We want Flair!"

It was a chant that echoed throughout arenas around the country for the past five months. Every time the word Horsemen was uttered, the fans, like a Pavlovian dog chorus, would scream out those three famous words. Every time a chop was thrown in the ring (regardless of the federation), the crowd would cry, "Whooooo!" in honor of their missing hero.

Missing, indeed. Legal tussles were keeping Flair out of the ring and out of the spotlight. A contractual dispute with WCW led to lawsuits being filed on both sides. In a previous column, I lamented the fact that without Flair, wrestling was just not the same. In spite of his absence (certainly not because of it), Television ratings may have gone up. The quality of both *Raw* and *Nitro* may have improved, but without the presence of the "Nature Boy," the picture was not complete.

If you've followed wrestling as long as I have, you probably have a few vivid memories that stand



Finally, Ric Flair is back in WCW. Eric Bischoff is still trying to keep him from wrestling in the federation, but he couldn't spoil the party on the night the "Nature Boy" came back.

out above all the others. I'm talking about those rare emotional moments that for whatever reason stick with you for a long, long time. For a lot of people, this will be one of those moments. Monday, September 14, 1998, is now history. A lot of people will debate whether the re-formation of The Four Horsemen was a good idea, but the return of Flair on September 14 was met with unanimous approval.

The "Nature Boy" walked out to the ring that night in Greenville, South Carolina, and gave

us all two things you don't see too often in wrestling these days: genuine, raw emotion and sincere appreciation.

Whose eyes did not well up as a teary-eyed Flair walked out to a raucous response? He greeted his fellow Horsemen with warm embraces. He acknowledged the crowd that had demanded his return immediately after he had disappeared. He said he felt embarrassed by the response, but so appreciative of his fans who have made it all worthwhile.

(Continued on page 54)

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By
Harry
Burkett

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT veteran athletes who yearn for that last stab at glory. Whether it's baseball, football, golf, or wrestling, a few months—or years—on the sidelines have a way of messing with a competitor's head. It often gives that individual time to gain perspective, rethink strategies, and regain enthusiasm. Most importantly, it gives the body time to recover from years of peak physical activity.

That's what happened to Rick Martel.

He vanished from the national spotlight in late-1993 without fanfare. There were no farewell announcements and no lifetime achievement awards. Nineteen years of ring wars had taken their toll both physically and mentally. It was time to slow down his career, if not end it altogether.

Did anyone miss him? Not many did.

There's a good reason for that. Martel's decline began in the late-1980s, when he turned against his long-time friend and Strike Force tag partner, Tito Santana. Instead of seeing the suave and debonair French-Canadian that everyone had grown to respect, WWF fans then saw a strutting, obnoxious, preening prima donna.

Martel was gone. "The Model" had arrived.

"The Model" was a mainstay in the WWF for the next few years, then vanished for several months. He resurfaced in the fall of 1993 and wrestled Razor Ramon for the then-vacant Intercontinental title. Ramon won the match, although the veteran put up a gutsy fight.

Martel, plagued with nagging injuries and possibly aware that his competitive fires were dimming, reduced his schedule and competed primarily on independent cards. He spent much of his time in his native Canada, where he trained young hopefuls for wrestling careers.

But Martel did not enjoy his semi-retirement. Several recurring thoughts ran through his mind: Do I still have what it takes? Could I have left more gracefully? Will people remember Rick Martel, or "The Model"?

Quite a dilemma for someone who should be considered a wrestling legend. Back in 1972, the 16-year-old established himself as one of Canada's hottest

prospects. In the late-'70s, Martel ventured to Georgia, where he became an instant hit with the fans despite his thick French-Canadian accent and schoolboy image. He captured the WWF World tag team title with Tony Garea in 1980 and 1981.

Martel dogged AWA World champion Nick Bockwinkel throughout 1983, defeating him in several non-title matches. Although he failed to beat Bockwinkel for the belt, Martel's defining moment came when he won the AWA title from Jumbo Tsuruta on May 13, 1984. For the next 18 months, Martel defended the title against the likes of Bob Backlund and Larry Zbyszko, and he wrestled NWA World champion Ric Flair to a 34-minute double-countout in Tokyo. Martel's reign ended when he submitted to Stan Hansen's "Brazos Valley" backbreaker on December 29, 1985.



Martel retired with class

Martel should go down in history as one of the last great scientific champions. But he was probably afraid that might not happen. He had sprayed too much "Arrogance" in fans' faces.

That's why Martel signed with WCW in late-1997. "The Model" was history. As the tanned and rested Martel jogged to the ring soon after his arrival in WCW, I couldn't help but think of a fortysomething Cary Grant. Martel was the epitome of the "vibrant gentleman."

He quickly made a bid for the WCW TV title and had several scientific encounters with Booker T. Martel displayed his famous temper at times, but he was determined to remain a sportsman. In fact, Martel saved Booker T from a few gang-style attacks during that period.

Martel, 26 years after his debut, captured the TV title from Booker T on February 16, 1998. Six days later, he tore the anterior cruciate ligament of his right knee during a rematch with Booker and, in the process, lost the TV belt. He returned to action earlier this summer, only to injure several vertebrae during a match with Stevie Ray.

Martel, at age 42, has decided to retire for good. This time, Rick Martel should rest assured that he will be remembered as a class act.

Who was that "Model" guy, anyway? ☐

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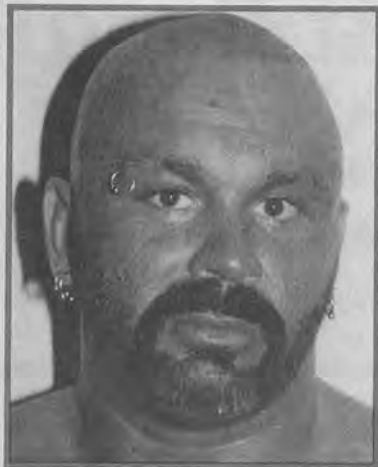
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T H U M B S U P



Thumbs Up to Petry Saturn. The "Rings Of Saturn" have a slightly brighter hue these days, now that Saturn (and the entire Flock) have won their independence from Raven. Saturn earned it by beating Raven at Fall Brawl despite wrestling under Raven's rules and with several broken fingers. It was quite a match. Saturn wouldn't succumb to Raven's "Evenflow," while Raven wouldn't give in to the "Rings Of Saturn." Finally, Lodi, Horace Boulder, and Sick Boy tried to interfere, but they were effectively countered by Billy Kidman. Saturn used a Death Valley driver to get the three-count and celebrate his personal Fourth of July. There's nothing like perseverance.

Thumbs Up to Hacksaw Duggan. Courage. Determination. They've been the hallmarks of Hacksaw Duggan, one of the most patriotic wrestlers in the history of the sport. Now Duggan is calling upon his courage and determination to overcome cancer. At press time, he was resting at his Florida home after undergoing surgery to remove a kidney that had a cancerous tumor. Doctors described it as a football-sized mass. We were choked up watching *Thunder* when Duggan told the world of his cancer. Undoubtedly, every wrestling fan's prayers are with this lovable man who is now fighting for his life.



Thumbs Up to Magnum T.A. Haven't seen that name in wrestling magazines for a while, have you? But Magnum, whose promising career was ended by a devastating car accident more than a decade ago, returned to the ring as a manager and led Tully Blanchard and Barry Windham to a victory over The Border Patrol for the NWA tag team title. Now Magnum is considering a full-time return to the sport as a manager. In fact, he's considering putting together an entire stable of wrestlers. "I've got the bug," Magnum said. "Maybe I've been away from the ring for too long, but I'm ready to give it another shot." We wish him well.



Thumbs Up to The Sandman. Over the past few years, a lot of top ECW stars have tried their luck in the WWF and WCW. Public Enemy. Rob Van Dam. Sabu. Raven. Petry Saturn. And others. For six years, The Sandman has remained devoted to ECW and has become arguably the most popular wrestler in the federation's history. But now Sandman, who's known for his chain-smoking, beer-guzzling ways, is going to do something for himself: He recently signed a three-year deal with WCW. Is he good enough to make a major impact in WCW? That remains to be seen. But we know he'll put forth a great effort.



THUMBS Down



Thumbs Down to Buff Bagwell. Brothers Rick and Scott Steiner battled to a no-contest at Fall Brawl, but that wasn't the big story. The big story was that although Scott Steiner is right down there at the bottom of the heap when it comes to mankind, Bagwell is right down there with him ... and burrowing lower. Bagwell used his serious neck injury as a ploy to help Scott try to beat his brother. He acted as if he had been reinjured and even allowed paramedics to load him into an ambulance. Then, when Rick wasn't looking, both Bagwell and Scott jumped him. We're so looking forward to Buff's return to competition. We can't wait for Rick Steiner to get his hands on him.

Thumbs Down to Kane. If it wasn't bad enough that he walked away from his WWF World tag team title defense with Mankind at SummerSlam '98, he made matters worse by showing up later, inside a dumpster, and hammering Mankind with a sledgehammer. Of course, Mankind was stunned. Even The New Age Outlaws, who won the belts in the two-on-one match, seemed stunned. Later in the card, Kane wanted to interfere in The Undertaker's World title bid against Steve Austin, but Undertaker wouldn't let him. Now we know why Kane and Vince McMahon get along so well. They're both lowlifes.



Thumbs Down to Dan Severn. Sure, we understand his disappointment in Owen Hart losing the "Lion's Den" match to Ken Shamrock at SummerSlam '98, but that doesn't excuse Severn from walking away from the ring in disgust. Besides, if Severn wanted Shamrock, he should have gone after him himself (which now, it seems, is exactly what he's going to do). Owen depended upon Severn. He needed guidance in dealing with the UFC-style ring and UFC-style rules. And what did Severn do in Owen's moment of need? He left him by himself. Let's hope Severn shows a lot more courage in his feud with Shamrock.

Thumbs Down to Ernest Miller. What's with this attitude change? What happened to "The Cat"? Maybe it's what didn't happen that set him off. Miller hasn't had many important matches during his stay in WCW, and maybe he thought he needed to become a bit more ... uh ... aggressive. There's nothing wrong with being aggressive and nothing wrong with Miller pointing out that he's a former karate champion. There is something wrong, however, with Miller randomly interfering in matches and claiming wrestlers aren't as tough as karate experts. If he really thinks so little of wrestlers, why did he become one?



CORRESPONDENTS

Reports

Philadelphia, PA (Correspondent—Alex Blake): When The Sandman was wrestling this handicap match against Justin Credible and Jason, no one at the ECW Arena—possibly including Sandman himself—realized it would be his last match in that building. Fittingly, the stipulations for the match stated that the winner would get to lash the loser with a rattan cane.

Sandman took control of the match from the start, dominating Jason with a flurry of punches. Jason tried several times to tag his partner, but Credible refused each time. After absorbing a lot more punishment during the next several minutes, Jason mustered up enough strength to execute a sidekick on Sandman. With Sandman dazed, Jason finally got Credible to tag in.

Credible's stay in the ring was short, though, as his chops were ineffective. When Justin tagged out, Jason had no choice but to re-enter the ring ... and endure more punishment. Once again, Jason had to withstand a ton of pain, because Credible refused to tag in for several minutes.

When Credible finally did tag in again, he used a shoulderbreaker on Sandman before he and Jason overpowered him with several double-team maneuvers. Their advantage was short-lived, however, as Sandman surprised Jason with a reverse DDT to get the pinfall win. In accordance with the prematch stipulation, Sandman got to cane Jason. Even the efforts of Credible and Nicole Bass couldn't save him



Together, Justin Credible and Jason were able to take down The Sandman in their handicap match at the ECW Arena. But they weren't good enough to beat him. Jason paid a painful price for the loss.

from that fate.

In other bouts: Tracey Smothers (with Tommy Rich & Little Guido) pinned Tommy Rogers (with Axl Rotten & Mahoney) ... Jerry Lynn pinned Mikey Whipwreck ... Sal E. Graziano beat John Kronus ... Spike Dudley defeated Sal E. Graziano ... Chris Candido (with Tammy Lynn Sytch) beat Lance Storm (with Dawn Marie) ... Tommy Dreamer defeated Jack Victory ...

Masato Tanaka defeated Bam Bam Bigelow ... ECW tag team champions Sabu & Rob Van Dam beat Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley.

Harrisburg, PA (Correspondent—Timothy A. Walker): Manager Johnny Glitter accompanied Dustin Runnels to the ring for his match against Tito Santana on a WSWF card at the Farm Show
(Continued on page 56)

WRESTLING COLLECTORS!

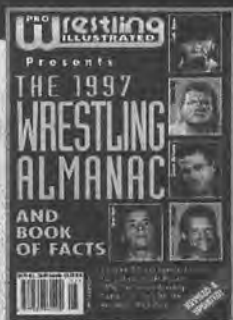
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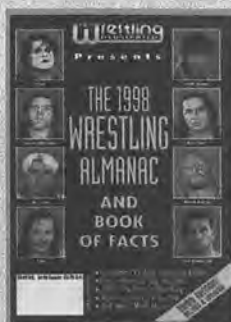
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YOU Asked Us

Q: "I would like to ask that punk Justin Credible what his plans are now that his feud with The Sandman is over."—Jasmine Rainey, Queens, NY

A: "Well, now that I sent The Sandman packing, I have a lot of free time on my hands," Credible boasted. "Maybe I could get something going with Tommy Dreamer. Wait. I've already done that. Or maybe I could take on Jerry Lynn. Nope, already whipped his [butt], too. There must be something going on in ECW to keep me busy. I guess not. Maybe I'll just go back to the gym to work out with Nicole Bass while I wait for Shane Douglas to challenge me to a match. Then I can beat his injury-prone carcass for the title. Everybody knows I deserve that belt. Then again, I could win Van Dam's TV belt just as easily. Or maybe me and Jason could win the tag belts. The options are endless when you're as young and talented as me. It doesn't matter who I beat, because Justin Credible will go down in history as the man who ran the 'Extreme Icon' out of ECW."

...

Q: "This question is for new WCW cruiserweight champion Billy Kidman: Billy, now that you've had so much success on your own, do you feel like a fool for wasting all that time in blind obe-

dience to Raven?"—Edward Barr, Springfield, IL

A: "In hindsight, yeah," Kidman replied. "But that's because I finally realized what I am capable of on my own in WCW. When I first got here, I had a hard time fitting in. But Raven made me feel like I belonged, just like he did for Saturn and Sick Boy and the others. We were like a family. But as time went on, Raven placed more and more demands on The Flock. Soon it seemed like his career was advancing while we did all the work. Saturn was the first one to say 'Hey, wait a minute, we've become Raven's slaves.' So he stood up to Raven and proved he could be just as successful in WCW on his own. It was then that I understood that I don't need Raven, and that an association with him was hurting my career. I just hope the rest of the boys see the light like I did."

...

Q: "I have a question for 'Lethal Weapon' Steve Blackman: Steve, after watching you and Ken Shamrock go at it on *Raw*, I can't help but wonder—are you guys still friends?"—Megan Tilley, Phoenix, AZ

A: "Yes, Megan, Ken and I are still friends," Blackman asserted. "But he's putting a real strain on our friendship with those temper tantrums. I can under-



We've seen the last of the Justin Credible-Sandman in ECW. Now that The Sandman has left for WCW, Credible isn't sure what he'll do to keep himself amused.

stand how some people get under his skin, and I know how he feels about Dan Severn, but he has no right to take his frustrations out on me. Ken has suplexed me before, and I let it go because I figured it was the heat of the moment getting to him. But those days are over. It makes me look bad and also puts us both at risk for serious injury when he does that. Quite frankly, I'm not ready to lay down my career for Ken

(Continued on page 57)

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Introducing

By Frank Krewda

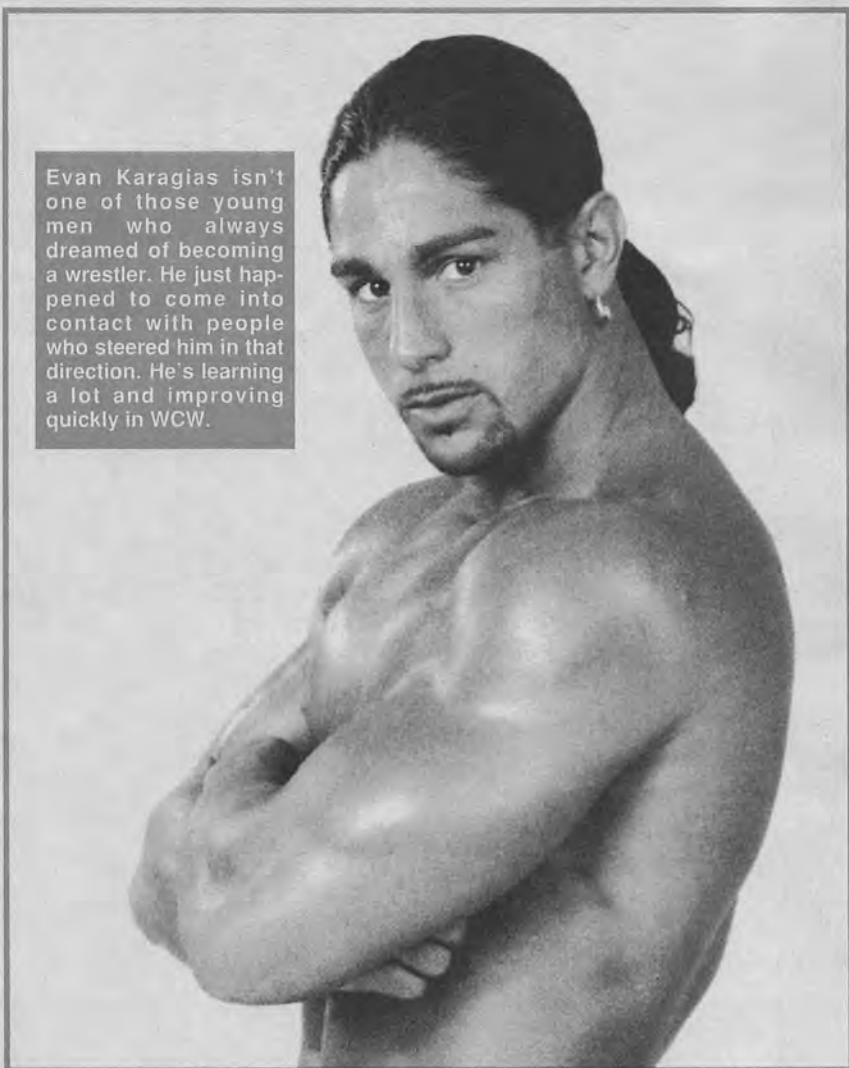
EVAN KARAGIAS

"I WANT THE money like Hogan, the ladies like Flair, and the respect like Arn Anderson. Oh, yeah, and the power like 'Easy E,'" says 25-year-old Evan Karagias (pronounced *cou-ra-geous*). Sounds rather ambitious for someone who was toiling in WCW's Power Plant training facility less than a year ago, but at least Karagias is motivated.

Although Karagias had just a casual interest in professional wrestling while growing up, he spent all four years on the mat at Howard Huss High School in Gastonia, North Carolina, earning all-conference and all-state honors in the 140-pound weight class. Karagias continued his wrestling career in college, placing third in the country at 150 pounds at Wilkes College in North Carolina before transferring to North Carolina State, where he put together an impressive record before tearing a rotator cuff in 1994.

With his college career short-circuited, Karagias decided to hang out on the sidelines until he could formulate a plan B for his future. That's when he was approached by a wrestling fan Ellen Martin, who suggested that Karagias give modeling a try. At first he was apprehensive, but at 5'11" and 160 athletic pounds, Karagias was still in good shape and had no other prospects looming. So in 1995, Martin and Karagias took off for New York, where they found an agent who helped Evan land modeling jobs for various men's fitness magazines and Calvin Klein jeans. Karagias even landed a small part on the day-

Evan Karagias isn't one of those young men who always dreamed of becoming a wrestler. He just happened to come into contact with people who steered him in that direction. He's learning a lot and improving quickly in WCW.



Despite having less than a year of professional wrestling experience under his belt, Evan Karagias thinks he's ready to climb to the top of WCW's cruiserweight division. And he'll get there any way he can

time soap opera *All My Children*, but the modeling career proved too erratic for Karagias, who went back home to Gastonia in early-1997 in search of a steady living.

Oddly enough, the specter of nine-to-five drudgery changed with an innocent trip to the local Wal-Mart, where Karagias bumped into family friend and former wrestler Vladimir Kolooff at an autograph session. Kolooff explained to Evan that his amateur background and acting experience made him a natural for the squared circle and persuaded him to contact Ric Flair.

"I just went right into his gym and told him I wanted to wrestle," Karagias recalled. "At first he thought I was just another fan. But after I told him I wrestled at N.C. State, his attitude changed. He could see I was serious."

Flair recommended the Power Plant, which is where Karagias started his career in May 1997. There he trained for six months under Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker and Chad Fortune. Karagias improved quickly at the training facility, but money was tight, and he needed to graduate from the "dojo" to the ring. "I told [matchmaker] Terry Taylor, 'Look, I need to make a living, I need my shot now,'" Karagias explained.

Taylor finally relented, and on January 2, 1998, Evan Karagias got his "shot" against Chris Jericho on *WCW Saturday Night*. Karagias lost to the future cruiserweight and TV champion, but he impressed the matchmaking committee enough to earn a chance to compete regularly on both the *Saturday Night* and *WCW World Wide* programs.

Unfortunately, the first year has been a struggle for Karagias. WCW's cruiserweight division is stocked with talented wrestlers like Dean Malenko and Juventud Guerrera, most of whom boast a lot more experience. Still, Karagias' confidence has kept him focused on the cruiserweight title. He was rewarded for his persever-



Less than a year after his pro debut, Karagias got a shot at the WCW cruiserweight title (when it was held by Juventud Guerrera). He claims he executes Juvi's signature move better than Juvi does!

ance with a shot at the belt, then held by Guerrera, on August 31. It was his first appearance on *Nitro*. Juvi prevailed, but Karagias opened some eyes in that match—including those of Wolfpac leader Kevin Nash, who watched the match from the backstage area.

"Big Kev came over and congratulated me after that match. Man, that means a lot coming from someone like him," Karagias admitted in a rare moment of humility. "Maybe he's scouting me. The Wolfpac doesn't have a decent cruiserweight, and I did wrestle for the N.C. State Wolfpack back in college. If you think I'm good-looking now, just imagine

me in red and black."

Karagias will have to register a few more "Ws" before Mr. Nash comes knocking, but he did notch his first win on September 9 by beating Nick Dinsmore with his "Tidal Wave" (450 splash)—a move he picked up from Juvi.

"Let's face it," he said, "I do that move so much better than Guerrera that he should be ashamed to ever try it again. And if I can't beat Kidman for the belt with the 'Tidal Wave,' maybe I'll take his move, the shooting star press, too."

Beating a champion with his own move ... now that would make a big splash in WCW for Karagias. □

Q

HOWARD FINKEL

A

“HERE IS YOUR winner ... and **new** World Wrestling Federation champion.” It has become WWF ring announcer Howard Finkel’s signature line over the years. And “The Fink,” considered by many to be the best wrestling ring announcer in the world, has had plenty of chances to use that line during his tenure with the promotion.

Can you believe he made his debut as ring announcer way back on Mother’s Day 1976? An avid fan of the WWWF, he was working as an usher at the New Haven Coliseum in 1975 when he suggested to the manager of the building that he bring wrestling to the venue. That manager ultimately sold Vince McMahon Jr. on the idea; he also told McMahon about Finkel. Since Finkel had a great voice, had been to broadcasting school, and had some experience as a public address announcer, McMahon gave him a chance to do some ring announcing. In January 1977, he made his Madison Square Garden ring announcing debut. He has been a full-time employee of the company since 1980.

Bruno, Backlund, Hogan, Savage, Warrior, Michaels, Bret, Austin. Finkel has introduced them all.

But he wasn’t prepared for what happened on the night of SummerSlam ’98. During the live **Sunday Night Heat** before the pay-per-view, an angry Jeff Jarrett wanted to send a message to X-Pac, his opponent in a hair vs. hair match to be held later that night. For no good reason, “Double-J” and Southern Justice decided to shave the head of Finkel. But X-Pac got revenge when, with Finkel in his corner, he defeated Jarrett in their match.

Editor-in-Chief Dave Lenker recently sat down with “The Fink” to discuss what happened at SummerSlam and a number of other topics.



Howard Finkel never had a chance. When Jeff Jarrett and Southern Justice held him down and shaved his head before SummerSlam (right), there wasn't much he could do. He was left lying in the ring feeling humiliated (below).



Q: First of all, Howard, I'd like to thank you for agreeing to do this interview. I think people are interested in what the deal is with you and DX.

A: My pleasure, Dave. I guess it is an unusual story.

Q: Everyone saw what happened with "Double-J" leading up to SummerSlam. He and Southern Justice shaved the head of a camera man on *Raw* six days before SummerSlam when they didn't like the way he was filming them. Then they made it clear they were going to do the same to one more person before the match with X-Pac. Why do you think they picked you?

A: I was just minding my own business when they showed up. There was absolutely no provocation on my part. There was no warning. They tackled me from behind and just went to town on me. I guess I was in the wrong

place at the wrong time. I was an easy target for them. What chance did I have?

Q: What happened between the time you had your head and mustache shaved and the beginning of the Jarrett-X-Pac match?

A: Well, I've been a fan of De-Generation X for a while, even though I never take sides in any matches. I was pretty hurt and distraught over what had happened. Madison Square Garden is like a second home, and my night there was ruined. So I was walking back to the dressing room area to collect my things, and I ran into X-Pac. He was getting himself psyched up for his match and asked me if I was okay. He was real angry about what they did to me and felt bad that Jarrett used me as a pawn in their feud. So we talked, and he said he wanted to help me out. I told him the best way for

him to do that would be to go out and beat Jarrett right in the middle of the ring.

Q: So for once, you were going to be taking sides in a match.

A: Right. Then he said he wanted to make me an honorary member of DX. Billy Gunn and Jesse James were around, and they were all for it as well.

Q: You must have jumped at that opportunity.

A: Actually, I didn't. Not right away. I told X-Pac I didn't think I really fit in with the DX image, but he said, "Howard, you're a great guy. You'd fit in anywhere." He insisted that I stand in his corner, and I couldn't refuse.

Q: You looked pretty good in that DX T-shirt and bow tie.

A: (Laughs) Yeah, I suppose you don't see that look all the time.

Q: Were you planning to get physically involved in the match?



You can just imagine how thrilling it was for Finkel to get a chance to assist in the trimming of Jeff Jarrett's golden locks after X-Pac beat him in a hair vs. hair match.

A: I was just there to offer my support to X-Pac, but like Vince McMahon says, you never know what's going to happen in the WWF. I ended up distracting Jarrett at one point, and he got a shot in on me, but it was all worth it, because we came out on top. And then I got to stand right there and see "Double-J" get his hair cut.

Q: Do you still consider yourself a member of DX today?

A: No, I was just with DX for the night. It was a one-time deal that I enjoyed. I know I'm not as cool as those guys, but if they need my help somewhere down the line, I'd support them. Let's just say I know I have friends in DX.

Q: A lot of people might not remember this, but you actually wrestled a few matches back in 1994, when you were feuding with Harvey

Whippleman. Was that something you always dreamed of doing?

A: I never really thought of myself as a wrestler, but that was something I just needed to do. Harvey came to the WWF in 1991. Before then, he was kind of a big fish in a small pond. But he had big aspirations. And for some reason, he always felt the need to correct me. He'd want to be introduced as *Dr. Harvey Whippleman* or *Mr. Harvey Whippleman*. He took a lot of pleasure in demeaning me and criticizing me. But I'm a professional, and that kind of stuff doesn't usually bother me too much. The ring announcer has

Did you ever think you'd see "The Fink" doing the DX crotch chop in the center of the ring? Okay, so he's not a full-time member, but he knows he has friends in the group.

a very important job to do, but the wrestlers are the show, so I tried to ignore Harvey. But then at *WrestleMania X*, when he was managing Adam Bomb, he took it too far. He came out and got in my face again, and this time, he ripped my tuxedo. That was it. I was sick of him showing me no respect. I don't know whether it was my style of ring announcing or what that he took exception to in the first place, but enough was enough. So I challenged him to a tuxedo match where the first man to rip the other man's tuxedo off would be the winner. We ended having a series of them around the Northeast, and he only ever beat me once, so I think I showed him I'm the better man.

Q: Tell me about some of your greatest memories of your time with the WWF.

A: The first thing that comes to mind is *WrestleMania III*. Stepping into that ring in the Pontiac Silverdome with over 93,000 fans there watching was a thrill that you couldn't understand unless you were there. It



was absolutely amazing, just unbelievable. You know, I still get butterflies every time I step into the ring, and I really had them for that show. I'll always remember the goosebumps and the chills I got that day. After that, I'd say whenever I get to announce a new champion, especially when the WWF title changes hands, it's exciting. Everybody tells me they enjoy the way I put the emphasis on the word "new" when I announce a new champion. And just the fact that I've gotten to meet so many wonderful people over the years—that's been great. I work for the greatest organization in the world.

Q: Your Madison Square Garden debut must have been a special night, too.

A: No question about it. It was

January 1977. Bruno Sammartino was wrestling Ken Patera that day. That was the same day I met Pat Patterson, and he has been a great friend to me over the years. I remember him wrestling Baron Mikel Scicluna that night.

Q: Since you've known Vince McMahon for so long, I'm curious about what you think of the "new" Vince.

A: I've never had a problem with him personally. He's the boss, and he's been a wildly successful entrepreneur, but I wish he'd recognize who the people's choice is. I can't figure out why he's so anti-Steve Austin. They're like oil and water when they're together, but I wish Mr. McMahon could find a way to mix well with Austin, because I think he has a chance to be

champion for a long time.

Q: You've been introducing matches since 1976. How much longer do you want to keep doing it?

A: I think as long as I still have gas in my tank and I'm still firing on all cylinders, I'll keep going. I love doing what I'm doing. I think one of the greatest assets I have is the enthusiasm I bring to the table. I'm still a huge fan of what the WWF does. I think we do a real good job of keeping up with the times and at the same time retaining a sense of history. I think it's important that we never forget about all the stars who helped make this business what it is today. What can I say? I love what I do.

Q: We all hope you hang around for many more years, Howard.

A: Thanks, Dave. Always a pleasure. ☐



Back in 1995, Finkel was in the middle of a bonafide long-term feud. And he and Harvey Wippleman did more than just arm-wrestle. "The Fink" dominated their series of tuxedo matches.

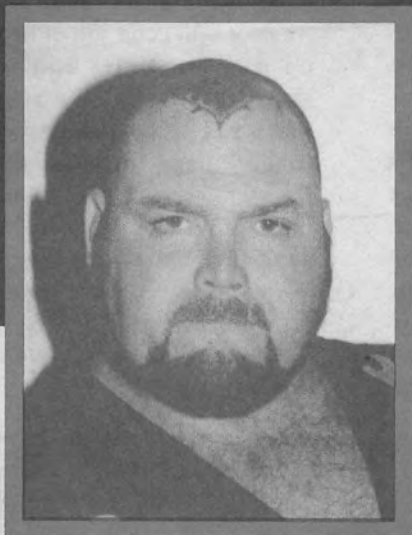
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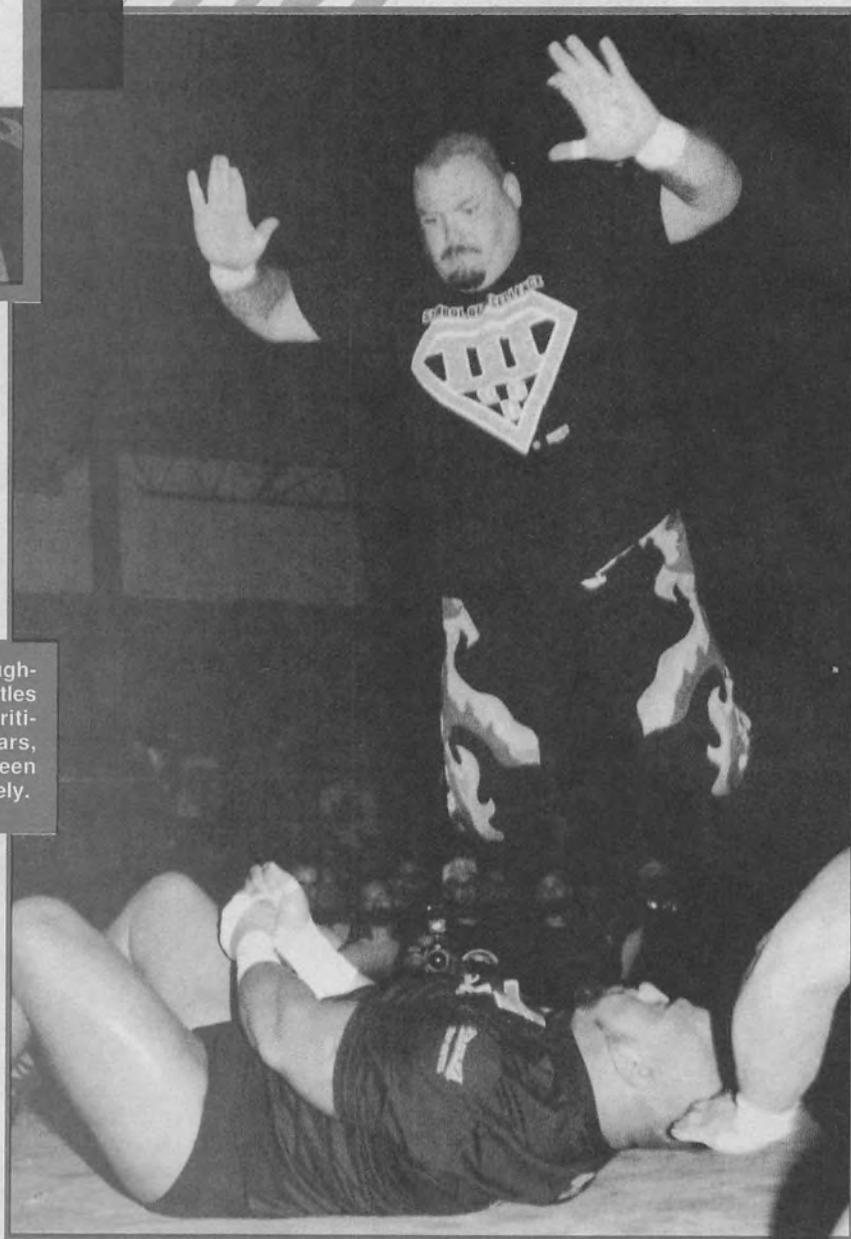
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PANEL EXAMINES

BAM BAM BIGELOW



Bam Bam Bigelow proved his toughness to ECW fans in his many battles with Taz. He has taken a lot of criticism from the press over the years, but most of our panelists have been impressed by what he has done lately.





CAPT. LOU ALBANO

"Bam Bam Bigelow is a one big cat, let me tell ya, and he can hurt you many different ways. He's been doing a lot of brawling lately in ECW, but I've seen this guy do moonsaults and flips with ease. Those moves aren't real easy to do, you know. And, man, that 'Greetings From Asbury Park' finisher is nasty. Is it any wonder Shane Douglas keeps Bigelow around? He's one of the most dangerous wrestlers out there. He puts the threat in Triple Threat, daddy."

Capt. Lou Albano, "The Guiding Light," has managed 13 different tag teams to a record 17 WWF World tag team titles.



KILLER KOWALSKI

"What impresses me the most about Bigelow these days is his mean streak. This guy is all business when he's in the ring, never plays to the crowd, never yucks it up with the other wrestlers in ECW. Hell, I don't think I've ever even seen him crack a smile. But better than that, he never let his friendship with Shane Douglas stop him from going after the heavyweight title, and when Francine interfered, he just wiped her out in a hurry, too. You gotta love it."

Killer Kowalski, one of the most sadistic rule-breakers in the history of the sport, runs a wrestling school in Malden, Massachusetts.



HARLEY RACE

"Bam Bam Bigelow has earned a reputation as one of the most ferocious competitors in the history of the sport. Unfortunately, he has also earned a reputation as a guy who hasn't made the most of his skills. That's because his career has always seemed to lack direction. Bigelow has always possessed a wealth of talent, but he never really learned to channel it properly. Who knows how far he could have gone with a decent manager like me guiding his career."

Harley Race, an eight-time NWA World champion, has also managed top stars like Lex Luger and Vader.



FABULOUS MOOLAH

"When I hear the name Bam Bam Bigelow, only one word comes to mind: mean. But I don't think he's very bright. I mean, anyone can see that the only reason Shane Douglas keeps him around in The Triple Threat is so he won't have to face him in the ring. That's a simple fact, hon. Bigelow should wise up and go back out on his own. He shouldn't settle for playin' second fiddle to Douglas. He's capable of a lot more than that. He's proved that on many occasions."

Fabulous Moolah, the finest woman wrestler in history, held the World title for 28 years. She now trains wrestlers in Columbia, South Carolina.



OLE ANDERSON

"Is there any man in ECW who can control Bam Bam Bigelow? I honestly don't think so. Taz tried it and went through the ring for his troubles. Van Dam needed Sabu and Bill Alfonso to do it. Pound-for-pound, I'll take Bigelow over anybody in ECW. Tell me this: Who is going to stop 370 pounds? Besides his physical edge, Bigelow is a veteran, too. He forgot more than most of those clowns in ECW will ever know about hardcore wrestling."

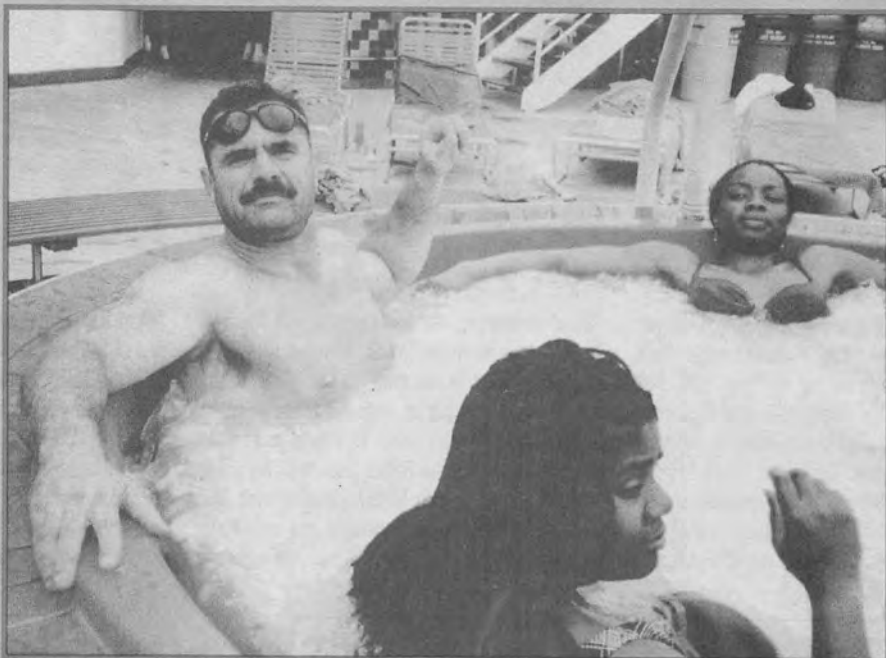
Ole Anderson, a five-time former NWA World tag team champion and founding member of The Four Horsemen, has been retired for several years.



PAUL ORNDORFF

"I expect big things from Bam Bam Bigelow in the future, because he is finally in his element in ECW. For the first time in his career, Bigelow seems happy, and that means a lot to a wrestler, regardless of whether he breaks the rules or not. He has also aligned himself with winners and established a bond with two of the most accomplished wrestlers in the federation. Let's just hope he doesn't become complacent again. When a wrestler becomes complacent, he's worthless."

Former WCW TV and World tag team champ Paul Orndorff retired from active competition after suffering a neck injury in December 1995.



▲ In a rare moment not spent in the company of long-time friend and NWO Hollywood associate Curt Hennig, Rick Rude joins some lovely new friends in the hot tub on WCW's *Bruise Cruise*.



▲ Hardbolloed Haggerty joins fellow wrestling legends Mae Young and Fabulous Moolah at a recent reunion in Seattle. Although Haggerty is now a part-time actor, he devotes most of his time to his landscaping business.



▲ That guy in the middle looks just like Nikolai Volkoff! The former WWF star and current independent competitor posed with Joe Pesci and Robert De Niro lookalikes at a recent sports auction in Fairlawn, New Jersey.



▲ No wonder they are no longer NWA tag team champions. Instead of preparing for their next match, Rick Morton and Robert Gibson decide that it'd be more fun to clown around with NWA champ Dan Severn.



► Former WWF stars Bret Hart and Tammy Lynn Sytch were reunited at the Wrestlecon '98 Expo. Sytch has since joined ECW, while Hart has his hands full battling Hollywood Hogan.



▲ Johnny Valentine was just one of many retired greats who greeted fans at the Legends Day convention in Charleston, South Carolina. The event was held in honor of promoter Henry Marcus' 50th year in the sport.

▼ There were several reasons why Tiger Conway Jr. retired from WCW, but these are the two most important: daughters Alisha and Lisa. Conway hung up the tights so he could spend more time with his family.



▼ Taz took a break from the rigors of ECW in August to get hardcore in a different way—with a new tattoo. Here he gets inked by Sayville, New York, tattoo artist Keith Claramello.



Spotlight N...

X-PAC

THE NEWEST MEMBER of DeGeneration X is in his second tour of duty with the WWF, but this time his attitude is the opposite of that of the humble 1-2-3 Kid persona fans remember. Maybe a year in the NWO toughened him up.

Actually, X-Pac has always been a tough wrestler and a top light heavy-weight. As The Lightning Kid, he won the Pro Wrestling America light heavy-weight title in 1990 (from Matt Derringer) and 1991 (from Jerry Lynn). He also won the Global Wrestling Federation junior heavy-weight title twice in 1991 (from Lynn and Chaz) before travelling to Japan.

The Kid made an unimpressive WWF debut in 1993, however, dropping his first match to Louie Spicolli. He also lost to mid-carders like Mr. Hughes and Doink the Clown, yet pulled off one of the greatest upsets in WWF history when he pinned Razor Ramon (Scott Hall) on *Raw*.

The 1-2-3 Kid, as he was called after his win over Ramon, steadily climbed the WWF ranks until he suffered a back injury against Marty Jannetty, with whom he would team to win the WWF tag team title from The Quebecers on January 10, 1994.

After the two men lost the belts back to The Quebecers a week later, Kid returned to singles action and feuded with Owen and Bret Hart. In the midst of his battles with the Harts, he found the time to win the tag belts again, this



time with Bob Holly. They defeated Bam Bam Bigelow and Tatanka in a tournament final at the 1995 Royal Rumble, but lost the belts the next night to The Smokin' Gunns. Frustrated by his inconsistency, Kid eventually sought the managerial guidance of Ted DiBiase. Suddenly, everybody's favorite underdog was one of the WWF's most despised rulebreakers.

Yet DiBiase's influence proved ineffective, and once free from his WWF

contract, he officially joined his friends Scott Hall and Kevin Nash in the NWO on September 16, 1996. With a new name, Syxx, and new attitude, he became the NWO's exclusive cruiserweight star and defeated champion Dean Malenko for the cruiserweight belt at SuperBrawl VII. But the cumulative effects of his high-risk wrestling style eventually took a toll on Syxx, and a neck injury sustained in October 1997 put him out indefinitely. With his chronic injuries, and the professional relationship between Eric Bischoff and both Nash and Hall deteriorating, Syxx became a sacrificial lamb and was fired from WCW in March 1998.

One night after WrestleMania XIV, he was introduced on *Raw* as the newest member of DX. He used the occasion to rip into Bischoff and WCW World champ Hollywood Hogan, claiming that Nash and Hall were being held hostage by WCW.

Since his return, X-Pac has been no less forgiving to his opponents. He has been feuding with Jeff Jarrett, whom he beat him in a hair vs. hair match at SummerSlam, but most of his energy has gone into an ongoing feud between DX and The Nation. X-Pac gave DX a very brief leg up on The Nation when he beat D-Lo Brown for the European title in Sacramento, California, on September 15.

Over the course of his eight-year career, X-Pac has gone from underdog to NWO-ite to WWF European champ to the subject of this month's "Spotlight." □



October 1991: The Lightning Kid drops in on Chaz, whom he defeated for the second of his two Global Wrestling Federation junior heavyweight titles. Kid also won the PWA light heavyweight title twice.

November 1993: The 1-2-3 Kid clinches an armbar on Rick Martel. Kid gained a lot of confidence after pinning Razor Ramon on *Raw* eight months earlier and went on to beat several top WWF stars.



June 1994: After he and Bob Holly dropped the tag team belts to The Smokin' Gunns, The Kid took on members of the Hart family. X-Pac has rekindled his feud with Owen during DX's war with The Nation.



October 1996: The Kid became Syxx when he joined WCW as the only cruiserweight on the NWO roster. He eventually won the cruiserweight belt from Dean Malenko, then lost it to Chris Jericho, his opponent here.



January 1997: Syxx applies his "Buzzkiller" on Rey Mysterio Jr. as his friends Kevin Nash and Scott Hall look on. Upon returning to the WWF, X-Pac contended that Hall and Nash were being held hostage by their contract with WCW.



August 1998: X-Pac and "Double-J" are old enemies from X-Pac's first stint in the WWF. Their feud culminated in a hair vs. hair match at SummerSlam. X-Pac emerged with his hair and beard intact.

THREE-WAY TITLE MATCHES They Just Don't Make Sense!

Three-way bouts are becoming commonplace in wrestling. Adding an extra man to the mix can introduce an element of suspense to an otherwise ho-hum match. But now champions are often required to defend against two opponents at once. What kind of logic is that?



By Harry Burkett

IMAGINE EVANDER Holyfield defending the heavyweight boxing title against Mike Tyson and Riddick Bowe simultaneously ... and losing it when Tyson knocked out Bowe! What if Bobby Fischer had been required to play chess against two Soviets back in 1972? And, since Pete Sampras is so good, why doesn't the USTA allow

Michael Chang and Andre Agassi to face him at the same time?

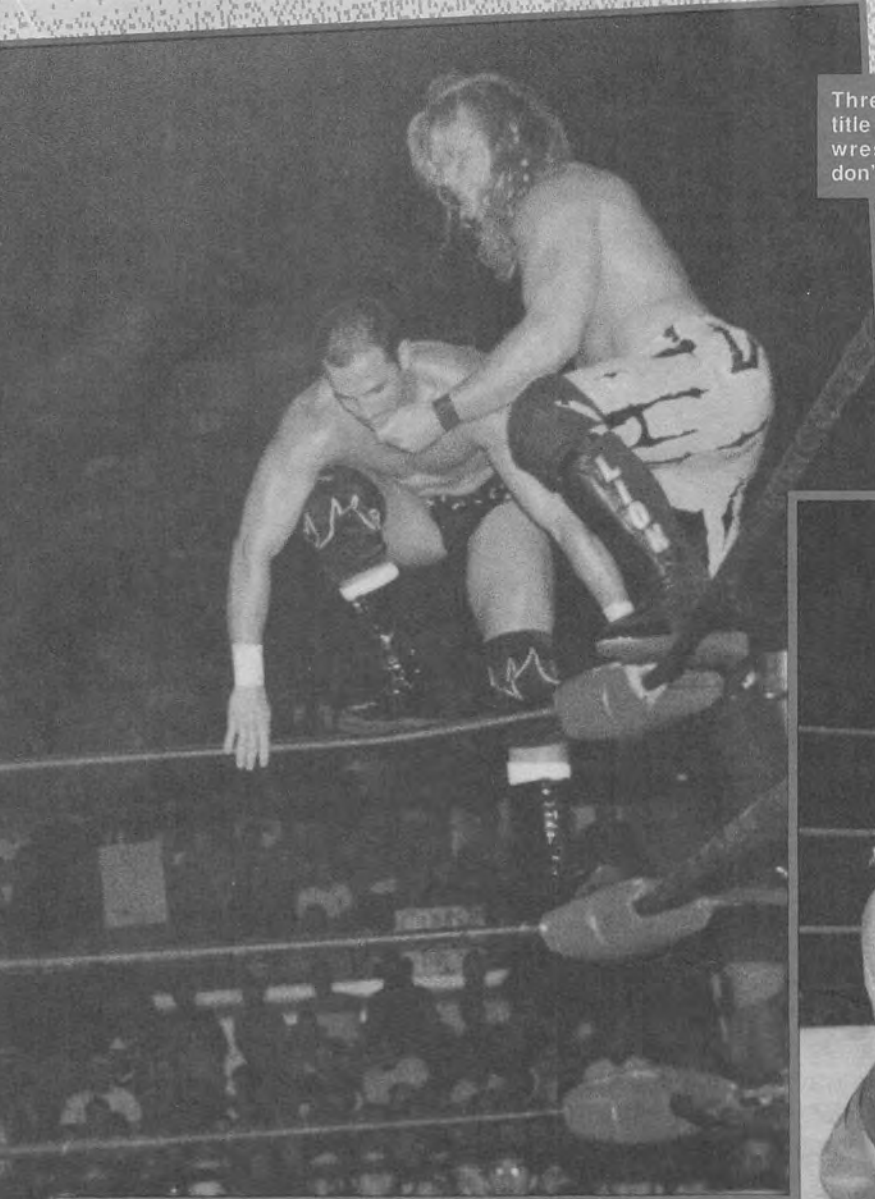
Sound ridiculous? Of course it does!

So why are we allowing this absurd practice to have an ever-increasing influence in wrestling?

During the last few months, WCW and WWF officials have allowed championships to be defended in an increasing number of three- and even four-way

matches. In WCW, Chris Jericho was required to put the TV title up for grabs in a three-way match against Stevie Ray and Chavo Guerrero Jr. The match went as designed, with all three men battling each other. Jericho and Stevie Ray attacked Chavo. Chavo and Jericho attacked Stevie Ray. Stevie Ray and Chavo attacked Jericho. In the end, The Giant ran into the ring and choke-

Three men in the ring, one title at stake. Is this the way wrestling oughta be? We don't think so.



Steve Austin defending his title against Kane is one thing (above), but adding The Undertaker to the mix (left) makes the match a mess.





There's no question that three in the ring can result in some exciting action, but it should not result in a championship changing hands.



slammed Stevie Ray, allowing Jericho to retain the TV title.

"The King Of All Loopholes," although he kept the TV belt, was livid afterward. "According to the NWA wrestling rulebook of 1967, the television championship must be defended *mano a mano*—not two against one, or three against one," Jericho said incredulously. "Jo-Jo Dillon should be impeached for plotting these kinds of conspiracies. There's no way a court of law would ever, ever uphold that kind of title victory."

Jericho makes a valid argument. Adding a third opponent thoroughly changes the dynamics of a match. It's as if the title has been declared vacant prior to every match, because the champion *must* score the pin or force someone to submit if he wants to walk out of the ring with his belt.

In three-way matches, the outcome is more dependent upon individual personalities and rivalries than skill. If the major federations want to create "three-way" titles, that's a different matter

entirely. But why are officials tampering with traditional one-on-one competition?

"The WCW Executive Committee is always trying to find creative ways to entertain the fans," said J.J. Dillon, the chairman of said group. "The three-way scenario is just another vehicle by which we do that. Besides, these controversies always arise when an innovation is introduced. Traditionalists once maintained that cage matches or no-disqualification matches were inappropriate stipulations when it came to title bouts. With the benefit of historical hindsight, I think we have found that not to be the case.

"And at one time, almost all title bouts were determined in best-of-three-falls matches. Today, virtually all of WCW's title matches are single-fall contests. These changes have enhanced the sport over the years and, for that reason, we will continue to explore other avenues of improvement."

A four-way stipulation was in effect during a recent bout

between then-WWF World tag team champions Steve Austin and The Undertaker, Kane and Mankind, Rocky Maivia and D-Lo Brown, and The New Age Outlaws. Maivia and Brown, adhering to prematch strategy, targeted Jesse James for a pinfall while keeping Austin and Undertaker out of the ring.

Would it have been fair if Austin and Undertaker had lost the World tag team title to The Nation if neither of them had been pinned or forced to submit? As it turned out, Kane choke-slammed Undertaker to win the title for himself and Mankind. But the question remains: Would the result have been the same if not for the chaos of a four-way tag match?

Paul Bearer, the former manager of Kane and Mankind, saw nothing wrong with three- or four-way stipulations. "Wrestling is hell!" he exclaimed. "It doesn't matter how many opponents there are! In these kinds of matches, everyone has an equal opportunity at victory—just like in any one-

on-one or two-on-two contest. Any champion worth his title should be prepared for guerrilla warfare at any time. If somebody breaks into champion's house, hits him over the head with a frying pan, and pins him on the kitchen floor, he should get the title!"

It ought to come as no surprise that these matches were popularized in ECW, where many championships have changed hands in "three-way dances." The Sandman pinned Steve Austin after Austin pinned heavyweight champ Mikey Whipwreck in a three-way match in December 1995. To win his third ECW title (August 1997), Shane Douglas pinned Sabu in a match that also involved Terry Funk.

The tag belts have changed hands in similar fashion. Public Enemy defeated then-champs Stevie Richards and Raven, along with The Gangstas, in October 1995. Doug Furnas and Phil Lafon had been champions for only a day last December when they were required to defend against Chris Candido and Lance Storm and Mahoney and Axl Rotten.

One-on-one—or, in the case of tag teams, two-on-two—competition is the only way that titles ought to be allowed to change hands.



Candido and Storm walked away with the belts.

At least ECW makes its three-way matches *elimination* matches,

so champions either have to be pinned or forced to submit at some point before they can lose.

It wasn't long before the WWF and WCW got turned on to the three-way match. In early-1996, WCW required then-World tag team champions Harlem Heat to defend their title in three-way matches on a regular basis against such teams as The Nasty Boys, The Road Warriors, and The American Males. Earlier this year, Diamond Dallas Page's U.S. title was at stake during a triangle match against Raven and Chris Benoit. Rocky Maivia defended the WWF Intercontinental title against Hunter Hearst Helmsley and X-Pac this past summer.

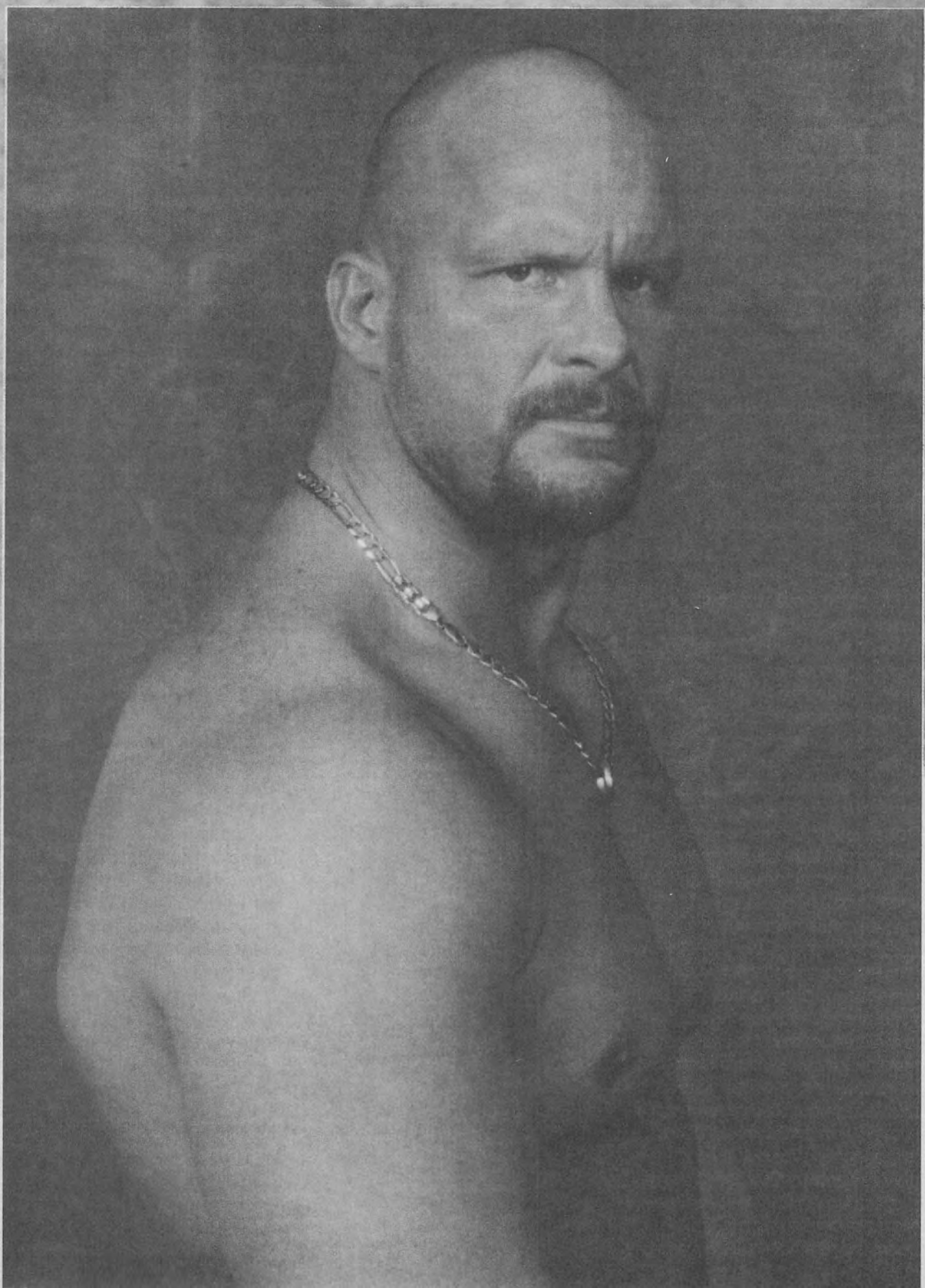
Steve Austin also defended the WWF title in several three- and four-way matches involving The Undertaker, Kane, and Mankind in September. "Stone-Cold" had only a 25 percent chance of retaining the title in those matches.

That isn't competition. That's called "stacking the deck." □



Undertaker is certainly good enough to win the WWF World title again. But if he's one of three or four men battling for the belt at the exact same time—well, how is that fair?

STONE-COLD'S



PERSONAL SURVIVOR SERIES

Steve Austin has beaten The Undertaker, Shawn Michaels, Mankind, Kane—virtually every top-notch wrestler in the WWF. Isn't there anyone—or anything—challenging for him? Well ...

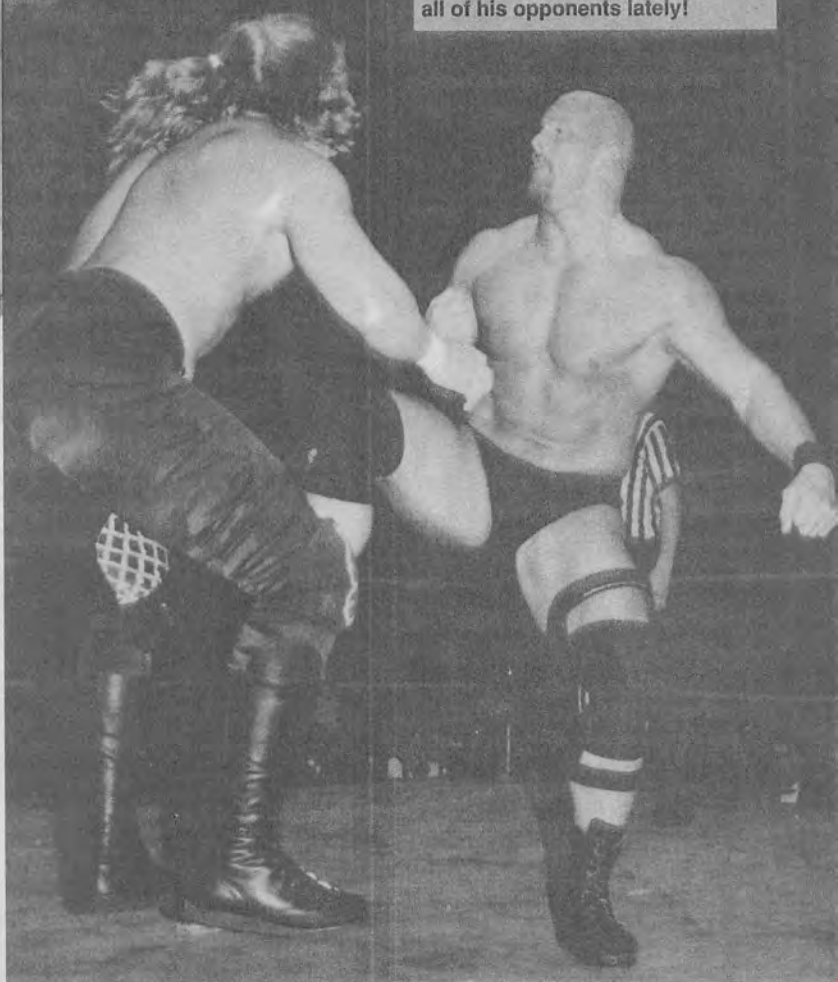
By Bryan Ethier

I'M DAMN SICK of this, "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin thought a day after he had cleanly pinned The Undertaker at SummerSlam to retain the WWF World title. *How many [butts] do I have to kick before that jackass McMahon gets the message?*

This was hardly the first time Austin had gotten riled up over this issue. For a year, he has

freely roamed the WWF like a wolf among a pack of blind sheep. Vince McMahon, owner of the WWF and Austin's number-one enemy, has done everything in his power to thaw "Stone-Cold." He has had the rabble-rousing

Steve Austin easily disposes of Hunter Hearst Helmsley. In fact, he's easily disposed of just about all of his opponents lately!



"Rattlesnake" arrested; he has formed a posse with Pat Patterson, Sgt. Slaughter, and Gerald Brisco in a futile attempt to lynch (well, not literally) Austin. All efforts to stop "Stone-Cold" have come up pathetically short.



"Stone-Cold" has dealt with Kane in the past; to do so again would hardly be a suitable challenge.

invincible," said Ken Shamrock, a man who finally got his shot against Austin on *Raw* in mid-September. "I matched him move for move and punch for punch before The Undertaker and Kane ruined my chance to beat him cleanly. I want to show the world I'm a better wrestler than him!"

Brave words. Shamrock, the 1998 King of the Ring, is one WWF wrestler over whom Austin hasn't steamrolled. He may wish to battle it out with Austin again, but McMahon has yet to wave his magic wand to arrange such a rematch.

"I honestly would not expect to see Ken Shamrock matches up with Austin anytime soon," confessed a WWF insider who spoke under terms of anonymity. "Ken's a good guy—a talented guy—and a hard worker, but McMahon must not feel he's in Austin's league. Personally, I think he might be good enough to beat Austin, but McMahon doesn't seem to want him as an ally."

But who is in Steve Austin's league? That's become the question of the day among the WWF's matchmakers.

McMahon has used all his power, plus his wellspring of savvy and salesmanship, to pit Undertaker against Austin in a poor pretense of a tag team. No luck: The pair grabbed a championship and survived each other's ill will.

McMahon has sent both Mankind and Kane after Austin. Owen Hart, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Chyna, and anyone and everyone who could snarl have taken runs at Austin on their own. They all collapsed under Austin's power like crumbling buildings beneath a wrecker's ball.

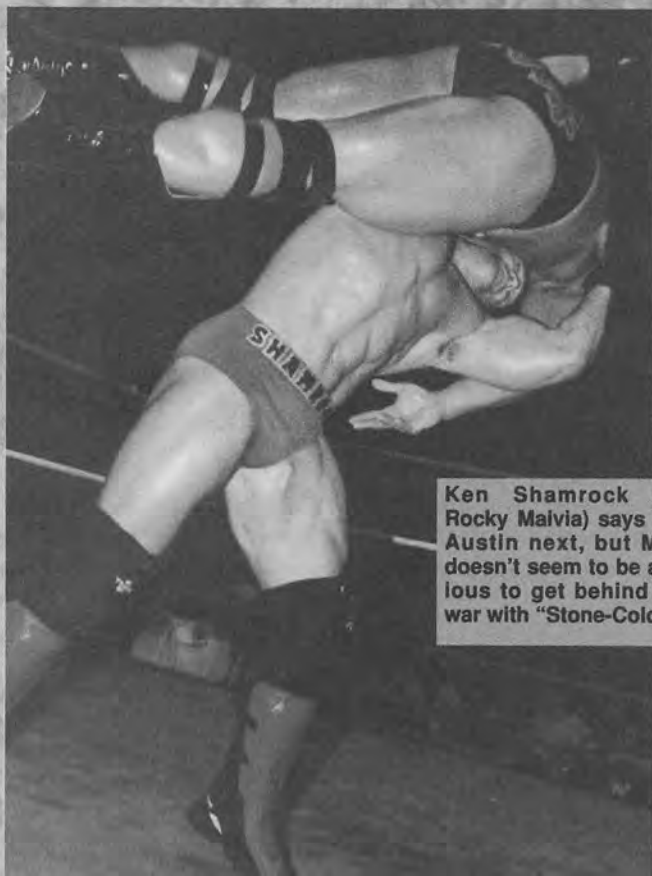
McMahon made Austin fight Kane and Undertaker concurrently in triple threat matches. Austin lost the WWF belt, but only when double-teamed him.

Face it: No matter whom McMahon sends Austin's way, Austin eventually prevails.

Steve Austin is not a happy man ... again. Of course, Austin is rarely content. But now he's suffering from an advanced case of

lethargy. He desperately needs a new and challenging foe.

"Steve Austin is absolutely not



Ken Shamrock (tossing Rocky Maivia) says he wants Austin next, but McMahon doesn't seem to be at all anxious to get behind him in a war with "Stone-Cold."

Most fans hope it will be Michaels, but that remains a long-shot. They do have a rivalry, of course; Austin beat Michaels at WrestleMania XIV to win the crown. But Michaels was struggling with a badly injured back, and he was far from 100 percent. A Michaels-Austin rivalry might be good for business, though. Both men are exceptionally popular, and both provide captivating matches.

So who *else* is left for Austin?

The Oddities? They can barely tie their own shoes.

X-Pac? A solid wrestler, but he comes with baggage in the form of DeGeneration X.

Owen Hart? Certainly a bitter relationship. It was Owen, of course, who nearly crippled Austin with a piledriver. But since that incident, Austin has easily put Hart in his place.

Rocky Maivia? Austin totally outclassed him when they feuded over the I-C belt.

You can go through the list of potential opponents: Edge, Val Venis, Billy Gunn, Bart Gunn,

Shawn Michaels would be a good opponent for Austin—if Michaels were healthy again, that is. That's a huge if.



Annie Get Your Gunn ... forget it. No one seems ready to step up and challenge Austin.

Correction: No *wrestler* is ready to step up and challenge Austin.

There is only one person big enough, strong enough, angry enough, and powerful enough to

bring Steve Austin down: Vince McMahon.

All the signs of a future Austin-McMahon in-ring battle are there. McMahon knows he has no one left to whom he can turn for support. It is up to him to finally don the tights, climb through the ropes, and challenge Austin. Back in April, the two enemies were in the ring and ready to wrestle each other. But Dude Love stopped the match before it could get started.

But things are different now. Six months ago, McMahon believed that even if he could not personally make Steve Austin submit, at least he had a cadre of wrestlers who could do the job by proxy.

No more.

"Vince McMahon must wrestle Steve Austin if he wishes to preserve his company," said one WWF executive. "I would be really surprised if it didn't come to that soon. If Austin goes through everyone and Vince won't fight him, he might just pack his bags and go home."

Just imagine a WWF sans Austin. No beer-guzzling, no double-middle fingers, no mass hysteria, no fun ...

No WWF.

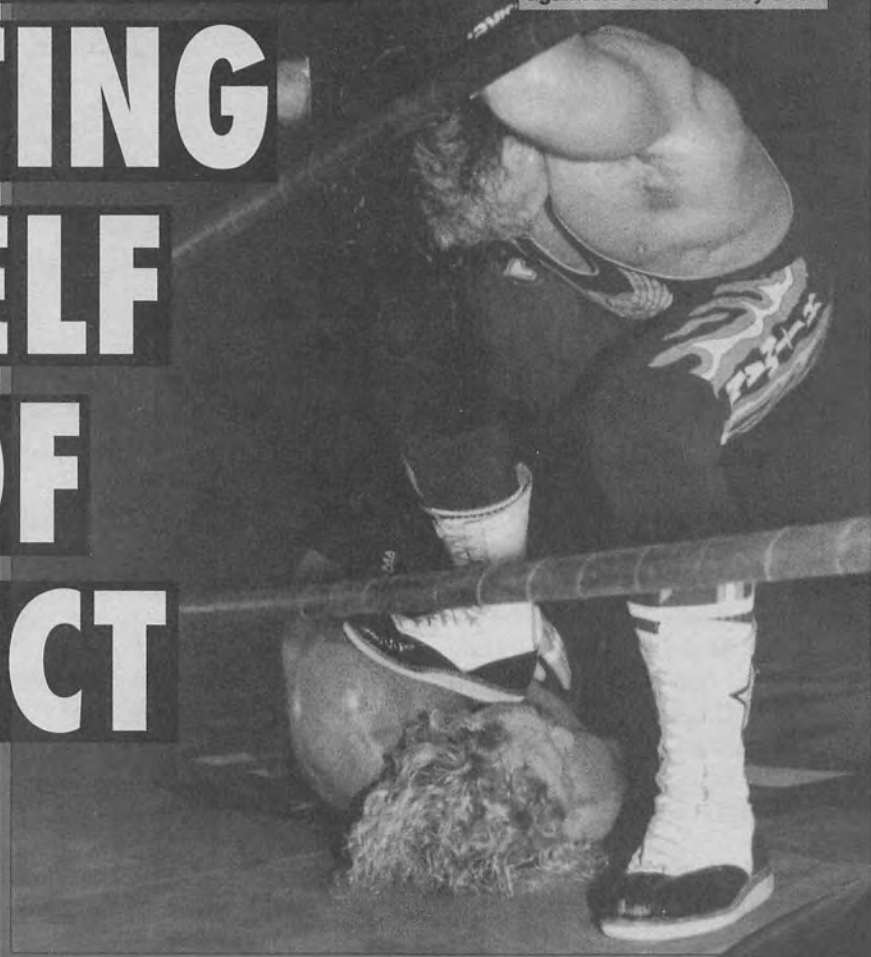


Is Vince McMahon about to don the tights and *finally* take his feud with Austin into the ring? It might be the only alternative left!

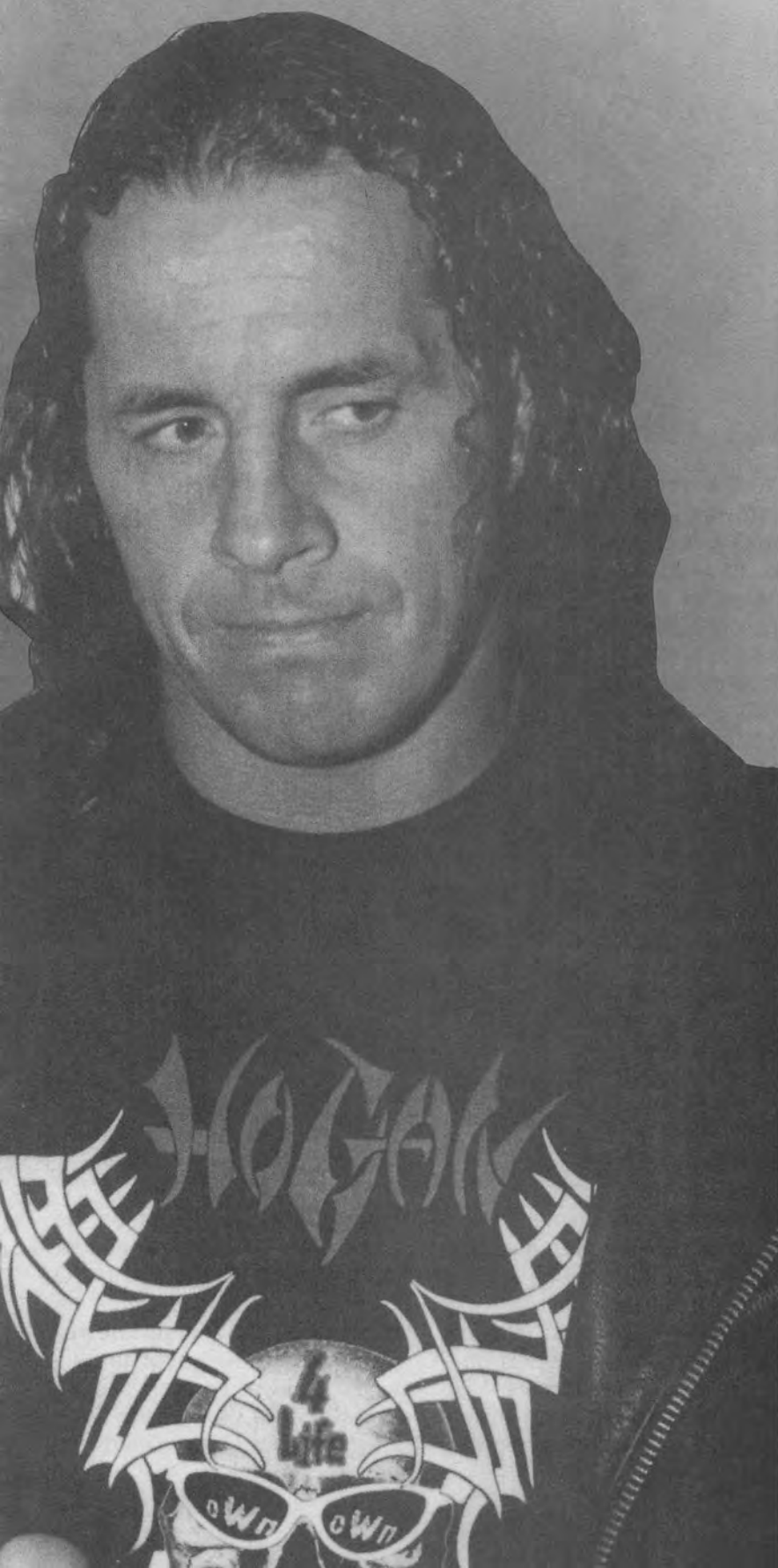


BRET HART: CHEATING HIMSELF OUT OF RESPECT

Bret Hart puts the boot to Dallas Page, who has been on the receiving end of some disappointingly sneaky tactics by the "Hitman." DDP says he'll never trust Bret again. He's not the only one.



Bret Hart could still be a great champion. He could be a great role model. But he isn't. It's his own fault that the fans will probably never trust him again



By Andy Rodriguez

BRET HART KNOWS the difference between right and wrong. He always has. It was drilled into him by his family at a very young age. He knows that fighting fair is the only way worth fighting.

He knows it, but he hasn't always acted it.

"I knew that things were going to have to change when I entered WCW," Hart said. "If they didn't, I'd have been eaten up pretty quickly. So I took control of the situation and made those changes. I did what I felt I had to do. If people don't like it, that's too bad. I know I'm doing the right thing by hanging out with Hollywood Hogan. I don't need to justify what I've done to anybody."

That decision to join Hogan's camp—a very questionable one, in fact—led to very unfortunate outcomes. When Hart made his WCW debut, most fans received him warmly. Eventually, though, they caught on to his agenda. He had come to WCW to win by any means necessary. Within a few months, he was convinced that Hogan was one of his best friends, that Hogan was looking out for his best interests as well as his own.

Okay, for a few weeks, he made it look like he was having a change of heart. He told people he was beginning to see how wrong he was. He told other wrestlers that he looked back at tapes of him and Hogan together and turned red with embarrassment. He said he wanted one more chance from the fans, that he wanted to start fresh and emulate Sting, a man he truly admired.

It was, of course, all an elaborate ruse. Sting bought it, though, and came to Bret's res-



As a member of NWO Hollywood, Hart has helped Hollywood Hogan in his wars against such foes as Roddy Piper. Will the fans ever forgive him for such transgressions given what has happened during the last few months?

If Page isn't careful, Hart might pull out another pair of brass knuckles. The "Hitman" isn't afraid to use dirty tactics to get a cheap win. Fans don't respect men who do things like that all the time.

cue when he was battling Hogan. But soon Bret was joining Hogan in a vicious two-on-one assault on Sting.

Many of the fans bought it, too, and who could blame them? He sounded sincere when he said he wanted to change. And he only formed an alliance with Hogan because he was frustrated over the lack of progress he was making, right? A forgivable offense, no?

For most wrestlers, it should be. But not for Bret Hart. If he ever asks the fans for one more chance again, forget it. They'll never believe he's speaking from the heart. An about getting that respect you so desperately crave, Bret, forget that, too. Wrestling fans might never respect you again, no matter what you do. Need proof of how sneaky the "Hitman" can be?

Consider some of the tactics he used in a series of U.S. title matches with Dallas Page only a few months ago. In one bout on *Nitro*, the Bret blasted Page with a pair of brass knuckles, then somehow slipped the knuckles into Page's trunks. He watched gleefully as referee Nick Patrick disqualified Page for having the foreign object in his possession.

And earlier, when Hart and Page were the top two contenders for the vacant U.S. title, Hart—or someone else from NWO Hollywood—blind-sided Page in the locker room before their title bout. Page ended up competing that night, but the effects of the assault were much too great for him to overcome. Bret insisted, however, that the match should take place.

The new Bret Hart, ladies and gentlemen.

Get used to him. He's not about to change. If he says he's going to, he's probably lying.

"Watching Bret Hart in those matches against DDP was difficult," said WCW broadcaster Mike Tenay. "He's too good an athlete to have to resort to those kinds of



tactics, but for some reason, he must have thought he needed to. And when he first joined NWO Hollywood, all those times he talked about how much he respected Sting—I never understood that. I was certainly encouraged when he broke away from Hogan, but now I have a hard time

figuring out what's coming next from him."

Hart's decision to go with NWO Hollywood left him with precious few supporters. Now it's hard to find anyone outside of that group who still genuinely respects him. For instance:

Said Dallas Page: "Everybody makes mistakes in this business, but I'll never forget everything that happened between us. I have a hard time respecting someone who stooped as low as he did."

Said Sting: "I have less respect for him than I have for Hogan. That says a lot."

Said Roddy Piper: "I challenged him to start fighting like a man, and I thought I got through to him. If Sting wants to jump him from behind in a dark alley somewhere, Sting's got my support."

There are plenty of stars in wrestling today who break the rules and are cheered wildly. There are stars who do it and leave fans simply shaking their heads in disgust.

Then there is Bret. He doesn't just break rules and use every sneaky, underhanded tactic in the book. He gets a thrill out of hurting any wres-

tlar WCW fans like. And he gets an even bigger thrill out of ripping into the fans.

"I hate the guy more than I hate any other wrestler in the world," said Jeremy Hedaya, 17, of Marietta, Georgia. "I mean, I've hated him ever since he started putting our country down. He never apologized for that, and now this? I'll never respect someone like him. I hope Hogan kicks him out of NWO Hollywood and he's left with no friends at all."

"There will probably come a time when things will look real bad for him and he'll need help like he's never needed help in his life," said Page. "I hope guys like me and Sting are right here watching when that happens. We'll have a real good time watching him suffer!" □



Hart still claims to be the best there is, but he hasn't been competing that way. He might be the best cheater there is, though.

The "Hitman" has the skills and the determination to make it to the top again—cleanly. He might never realize that.



ROCK BOTTOM!



Can Maivia Climb Back After
The Helmsley/Chyna Smack?

Rocky Maivia made the biggest mistake of his life when he humiliated Chyna. Five days later at SummerSlam, she got the last word. Now Maivia is fighting to save his career ... and his pride

By Dave Rosenbaum

EVEN THE HONKY TONK Man must have been laughing. The longest-reigning WWF Intercontinental champion of all-time might not have been the greatest I-C champion ever, but this much is certain: Neither was Rocky Maivia. Sure, his title reign lasted a good long time: Maivia won the belt (by forfeit) in December 1997 and didn't relent until SummerSlam '98 on August 30. But Maivia, whose time as champion was marked by few clean victories, many more tainted victories, and a slew of DQ losses, went down as ignominiously as possible.

In fact, by the time Maivia was finished with the most disgraceful week in I-C title history, he had ...

... angered Chyna and Hunter Hearst Helmsley by turning away in disgust after acting as if he was going to kiss Chyna.

... lost the I-C belt in a ladder match at SummerSlam for the simple reason that Helmsley's interferer—Chyna—was better than Maivia's interferer—Mark Henry.

... made himself look foolish by requesting a match against Chyna.

"Now I've heard everything," Helmsley snarled as Chyna shook her head disapprovingly in the



It's been a rough few months for Rocky Maivia (above), who lost the Intercontinental title to Hunter Hearst Helmsley (left) at SummerSlam—all because of the interference of Chyna (far left).



Maivia has gone to brutal extremes against "Triple-H," but to no avail; he's not the Intercontinental champion now, and he might be wondering if he'll ever get the belt back again.

and every other challenger, but he couldn't run forever. Bottom line: Me and 'Triple-H' laid the smack down on 'The Rock.'"

Maivia has nobody to blame for this stunning fall but himself. Instead of concentrating on preparing for the SummerSlam match, Maivia took time out from his schedule to humiliate Chyna. Helmsley and DeGeneration X were barricaded in a dressing room while Henry restrained Chyna. Maivia acted as if he was going to kiss Chyna, but turned away in disgust at the last moment. Maivia ordered Henry to kiss her, but Shawn Michaels stormed the ring and attacked Henry with a chair before he could do so.

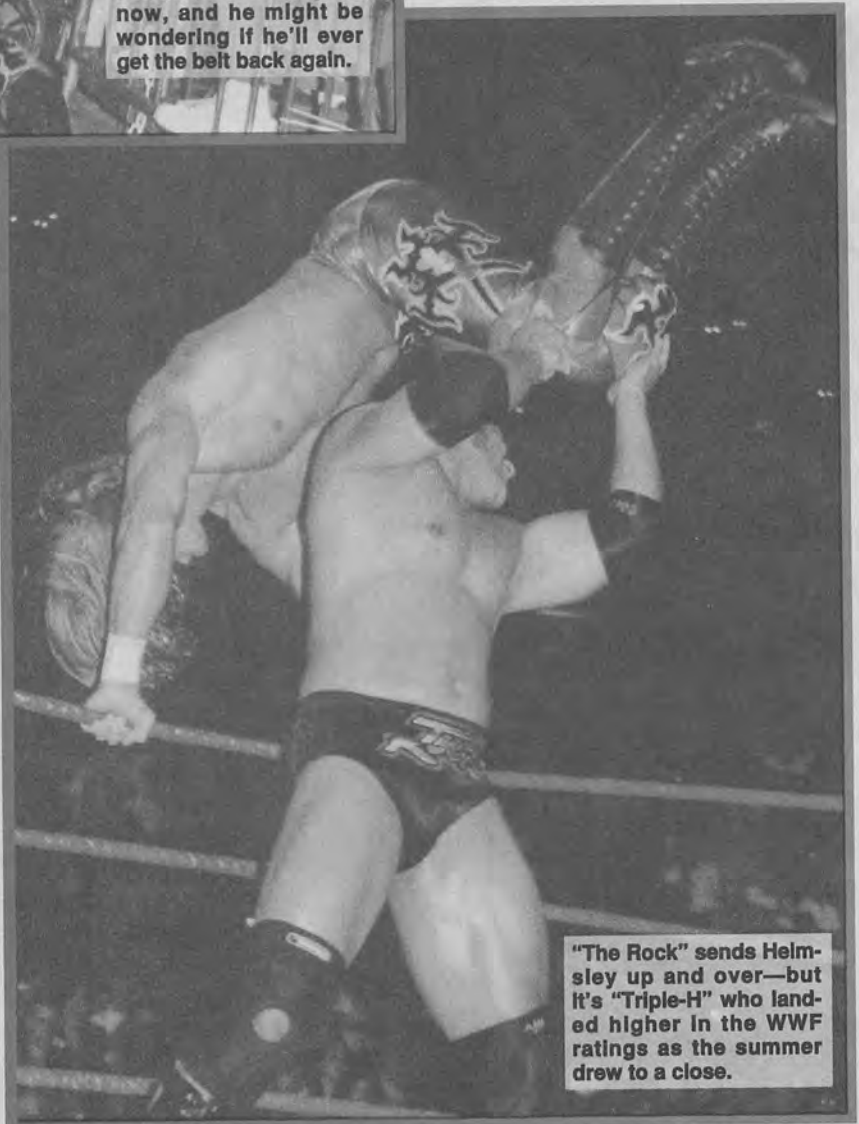
background. "He wants a match against Chyna? He wants to beat up a woman? I mean *try* to beat up a woman."

Chyna cut off Helmsley before he could say more.

"I'll wrestle him," Chyna said. "I'd kick his [butt]. Then maybe I'd go after the belt myself."

Helmsley laughed at that last remark, and Chyna gave him a good-natured elbow to the ribs to let him know she was kidding. Chyna is Helmsley's bodyguard. She has no intention of engaging in Diesel-like oneupmanship by pursuing Helmsley's title. Still, Helmsley knows there's a good chance he wouldn't have become champion without Chyna ... and Maivia knows he was victimized by one of the most effective one-two punches in WWF history.

"The best damn Intercontinental champion there ever was?" Chyna asked hypothetically, referring to Maivia's favorite self-proclamation. "That's a laugh. He never beat 'Triple-H' cleanly. His title reign was a joke. He ran from us



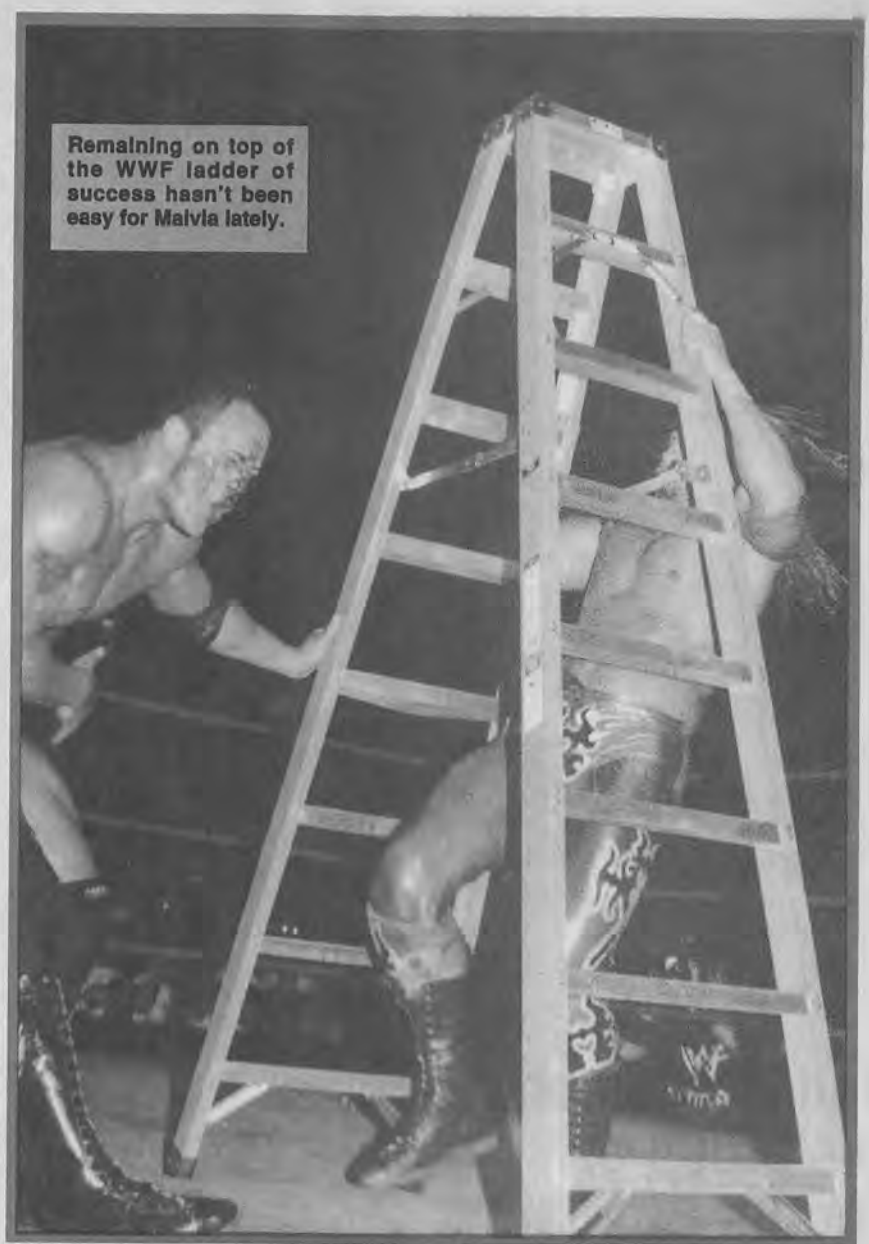
"The Rock" sends Helmsley up and over—but it's "Triple-H" who landed higher in the WWF ratings as the summer drew to a close.

Helmsley was enraged over Maivia's despicable actions. Chyna wanted nothing more than to get a piece of Maivia, and she did. She interfered several times in the SummerSlam match and was directly responsible for Helmsley's victory. As Maivia climbed the ladder and reached for the belt, Chyna interfered and nailed Maivia with a low blow, toppling him to the canvas. Helmsley easily climbed the ladder and retrieved the belt for the win as Maivia painfully looked on.

"That piece of trash interfered again!" Maivia complained, conveniently forgetting that Henry also interfered by tossing white powder at Helmsley. "She's always getting in the way. Give 'The Rock' one match against Helmsley without Chyna at ring-side, and I guaran-damn-tee he won't get up from the 'Rock Bottom.' What kind of man runs behind a woman when he's in trouble? What kind of man has a woman for a bodyguard? Not 'The Rock.' 'The Rock' doesn't need a bodyguard. But if it takes all of The Nation to destroy Helmsley and Chyna, then that's what's gonna have to happen."

Maivia is clearly at a personal low. Petitioning WWF Commissioner Sgt. Slaughter for a match against Chyna was clearly the act of a desperate man. Slaughter delayed his decision, saying it could take months to arrange such a mixed match, even if the WWF wanted to hold one. According to WWF insiders, however, Slaughter delayed the decision because he wanted to make certain Maivia was serious in his demands.

"Let's face it, Rocky Maivia would be putting his career on the line in a match against Chyna," said a WWF insider. "It's unlikely he would lose, but if he did, he'd never get over it. He'd be totally humiliated. And if he won, everybody would say, 'Big deal. You beat a woman.' I'm sure Chyna



wouldn't mind wrestling Maivia. He's at such a psychological low, she might even have a chance against him. At least she'd see it that way."

Maivia needs to regroup, and he finally seems to realize that. Just weeks after SummerSlam, he took on and beat Kane with the help of Mankind. The fans actually cheered for him when he delivered the "People's Elbow" on Kane. That same night, he saved Mankind from an attack by Kane and The Undertaker. Again the fans cheered him. Was this the beginning of "The Rock's" transformation into a fan favorite?

Perhaps, but those close to him say he still talks about what Chyna and "Triple-H" did to him all the time.

For his own good, he must somehow ignore Chyna and make regaining the belt his only priority. The old saying that you have to hit rock bottom before working your way back to the top might be true in this case. Maivia suffered the ultimate humiliation, and he's still letting his emotions get the best of him.

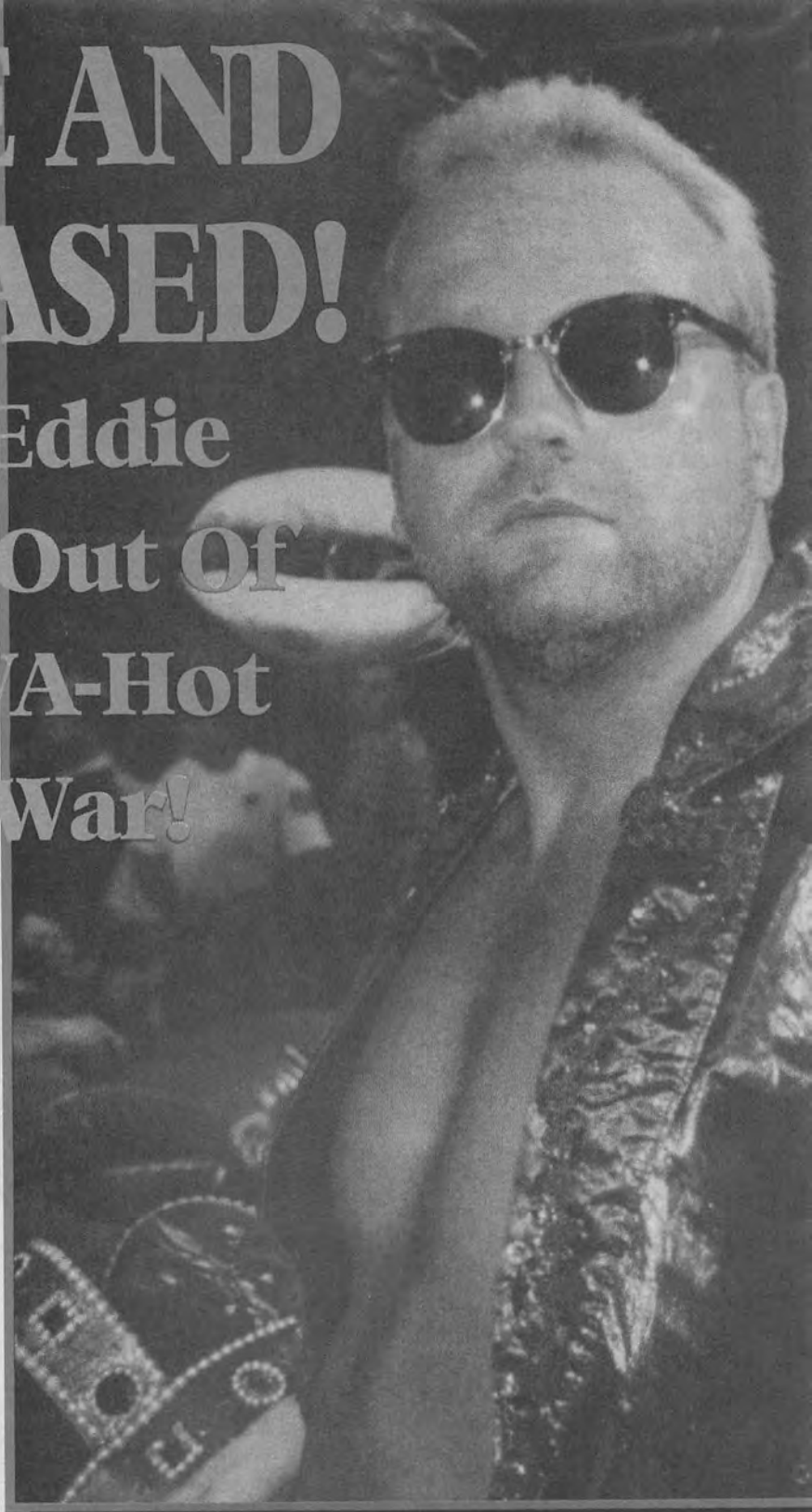
Each time Chyna and Helmsley goad him, Maivia reacts. And as long he keeps reacting, they will have the upper hand. □

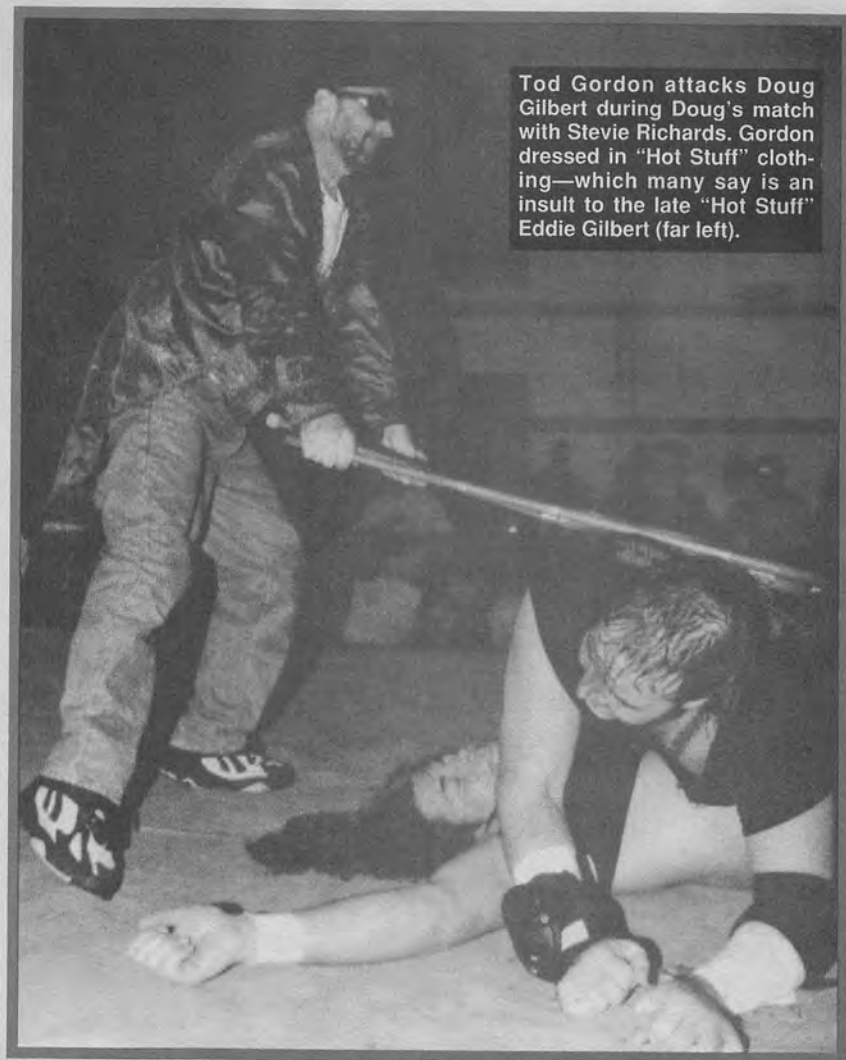
CEASE AND DECEASED!

Leave Eddie
Gilbert Out Of
The NWA-Hot
Stuff War!

Tod Gordon and his group of former ECW stars were despicable enough before they brought Eddie Gilbert's memory into their feud with

NWA promoter Dennis Coraluzzo. How low have they sunk now? The actions of Missy Hyatt, who was once Eddie's wife, tell it all





Tod Gordon attacks Doug Gilbert during Doug's match with Stevie Richards. Gordon dressed in "Hot Stuff" clothing—which many say is an insult to the late "Hot Stuff" Eddie Gilbert (far left).

By Dave Rosenbaum

THEY ARE GRAVEDIGGERS, a group of men so despicable they make NWO Hollywood and The Nation seem like decent guys. At least Eric Bischoff has never sunk so low as to bring a dead man into a feud. At least Mark Henry has never desecrated the dearly departed.

What makes it worse is the ex-wife, of all people. The ex-wife—who once loved the man they're desecrating, who walked down the aisle with him and exchanged sacred vows with him—is in for a piece of the action, too.

There is no limit to how low Tod Gordon and his group of former ECW stars are willing to sink in their feud with NWA Cham-

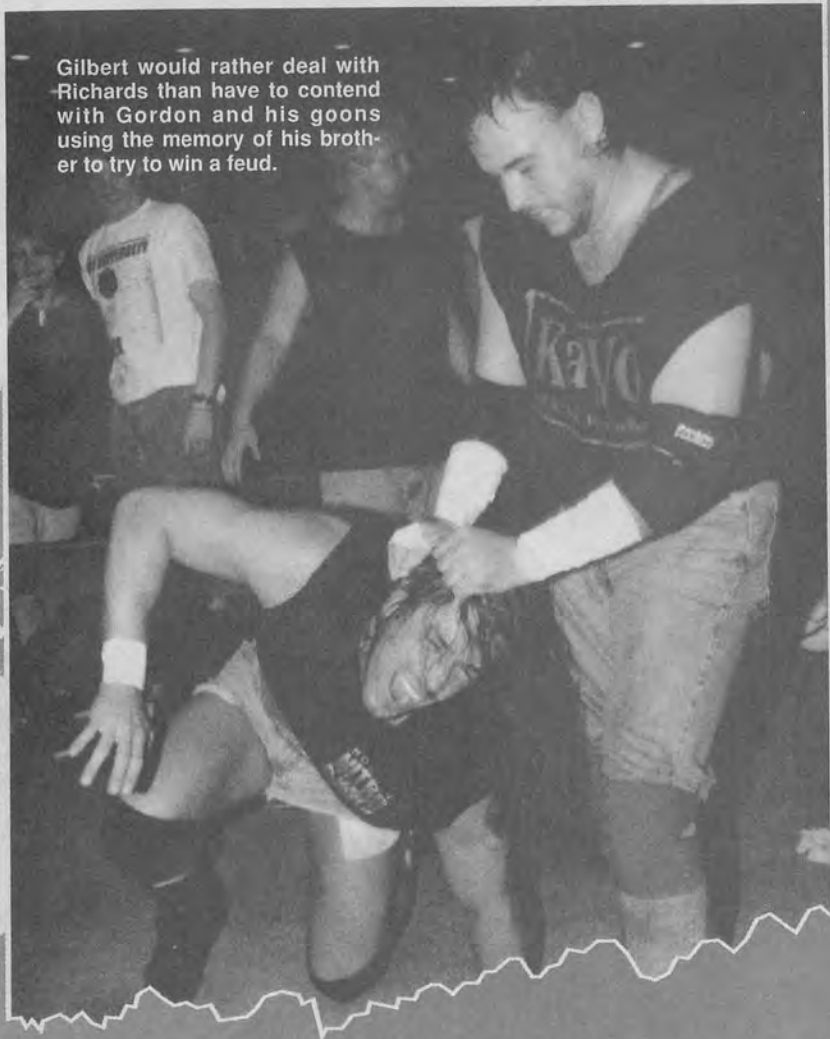
pionship Wrestling America promoter Dennis Coraluzzo and Doug Gilbert.

So low ... so low.

Gordon, the former ECW commissioner, was one of five masked men who invaded NWA Championship Wrestling America in late-June. A month later, at an NWA card in Mount Holly, New Jersey, Gordon appeared with Stevie Richards, 911, The Pit Bulls, Kimona, Brian Lee, Rocco Rock, and Gordon. They were uninvited guests. Gordon struck Coraluzzo with a chair, then struck Coraluzzo's teenage son, Marc.

But the former ECWers weren't through for the night. Gordon ran to the dressing room and pulled on an Eddie Gilbert ring jacket

Gilbert would rather deal with Richards than have to contend with Gordon and his goons using the memory of his brother to try to win a feud.



I'm sure hurts Eddie the most, wherever he's watching this from, is that Missy got involved with Gordon's bunch. That's the lowest blow of all."

Indeed, Missy Hyatt, former wife of Eddie Gilbert, found her ticket back into the wrestling world by latching on to Gordon's despicable group. She thinks Eddie would have appreciated this kind of tactic, but those who knew Eddie Gilbert say that's not true at all.

"I'm not going to sit here and tell you what Eddie would have said," Doug Gilbert explained. "It's not my job to speak for my brother. I want him to rest in peace. But I know I'm disappointed. I know my brother loved Missy at one time, and she loved him. For a while, anyway. All I'm saying is that this should be between Gordon and me and Dennis. Eddie doesn't have anything to do with this feud. Leave him out of it."

That seems like a reasonable request, but Gordon and his men have been remarkably successful

and Eddie Gilbert sunglasses. Doug Gilbert, incensed by this insult to his brother's memory, confronted Gordon—and got attacked by the ex-ECW crew.

Knowing this, it should come as no surprise that Gordon began calling his group Hot Stuff and Hyatt International, which is what Eddie Gilbert used to call his group. But it's not a tribute to Gilbert at all—it's a revolting insult.

"I know what they're doing," Doug Gilbert said. "They're trying to get back at me by dirtying the memory of my brother. But I was always taught to believe there were certain lines in wrestling that you didn't cross. You never try to kill your opponent. And you don't bring a dead person into a feud. You *never* get that personal. The thing that hurts me the most, and

911, who weighs about 310 pounds, attacks Ace Darling in a match for—believe it or not!—the NWA light heavy-weight title.





Gordon and Missy Hyatt as Hot Stuff and Hyatt International (left) seem like a mockery of the Hot Stuff and Hyatt International of a decade ago (below). Well, they more than seem like. They *are* a mockery.



in their NWA invasion and have no intention of backing off. In August, Gilbert and Coraluzzo would have received five minutes in the ring with Gordon if the ECW group didn't win three NWA belts in one weekend. Gordon's men succeeded. The Pit Bulls defeated Steve Corino and Lance Diamond for the NWA U.S. tag team title. Stevie Richards defeated Gilbert for the NWA National title. And 911—wrestling as a light heavy-weight even though he weighs close to 310 pounds—beat Ace Darling for the light heavyweight title. A supposedly blind official, you see, claimed he weighed 911 in at 217 pounds.

"This is absolute domination, plain and simple," Gordon crowed. "We came, we saw, we conquered, and we're still conquering. Hot Stuff and Hyatt International lives again, but this time it's bigger and better than ever! You know why Missy latched on with us? Because she knows that this time, it's the real thing. It really is hot stuff! She's tired of hanging around with losers. She wants to be with winners."

Whether that's true is impos-

sible to discern, because Hyatt refused to be interviewed for this story. A source close to the situation said Hyatt at first hesitated when offered a chance to join Gordon's group, then "decided to go for it because she saw the money might be good."

Ironically, the furor over Hot Stuff and Hyatt International has overshadowed its significant accomplishments. Hot Stuff and Hyatt International—and we use the term for identification purposes only—has done what The Outsiders couldn't do in WCW: invade and conquer. They've made the NWA Championship

Wrestling America stars look pretty bad and woefully over-matched—at least for now.

"I don't know about that," Coraluzzo said. "We'll see how long they stay on top. I got a lot of faith in my guys."

"But that's not what this is all about," Coraluzzo added. "It's about a shameful display by a group of men who have no respect for a great wrestler who died well before his time. My heart breaks for Doug Gilbert and his family. Something like this shouldn't be allowed to happen. And, I assure you, we're doing our best to put an end to it." □

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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from page 5)



Ric Flair and Chris Benoit were reunited as members of The Four Horsemen on Nitro in September, but Jennifer Deutsch says the return of Flair, who settled his legal problems with WCW, stole the show.

hangs out in the bleachers enough for you people? The last thing we need is another Sting.

To top that off, Warrior is also trying to put together his own gang, One Warrior Nation—a blatant ripoff of the New World Order. And didn't he and Hogan feud about 10 years ago in the WWF? Is it me, or does this guy make absolutely no sense when he picks up a microphone? He talks and talks and talks, but doesn't say anything. Maybe only his "Warriors" know what this guy is talking about. We are approaching the year 2000, yet Warrior seems to be stuck in the 1980s.

MICHAEL JARVIS
Lubbock, TX

professional wrestling, but nothing comes close to the ovation Ric Flair received upon his return to WCW in September. The "Nature Boy" stole the show! No offense to Arn Anderson, Dean Malenko, Chris Benoit, and Steve McMichael, but when they called Ric out, the Horsemen became secondary.

Of course, the evening was almost ruined by Eric Bischoff, but Flair put him in his place right away. Eric Bischoff represents everything that is wrong with the world today. I hope we'll see more of the "Nature Boy" and less of Bischoff from now on.

JENNIFER DEUTSCH
Worcester, MA □

SHOWSTOPPER

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

(Continued from page 7)



Ernest Miller is always in a bad mood these days. He wants respect. He thinks wrestlers are inferior athletes compared to martial artists. He says he's the greatest. Now even Doug Dellinger can't stand him.

England heavy-weight title from **Erich Sbraccia**. "I'm like a fine wine," Windham said. "As I age—and very gracefully, I might add—I just keep getting better and better. **Steve Austin** is next on my list. I've always wanted to be WWF World champion, and I think my day has come. I've already started negotiating with his people."

In what many consider to be a serious tactical error, **Bill Alfonso** has

WCW cruiserweight champion **Billy Kidman** insists he doesn't feel like a "true" champion yet. "Not to take anything away from the man I defeated for the belt [**Juventud Guerrera**]," he said, "but the man I need to beat to feel like a complete champion is **Rey Misterio Jr.** Misterio is really the consummate cruiserweight. In my book, you gauge who you are in this division by how you do against him. I'm anxious for him to return when his injuries heal, and I'd gladly accept his challenge."

Veteran **Barry Windham** is on quite a winning streak. On September 19, seven days after capturing the NWA tag team belts with partner **Tully Blanchard**, Windham won the NWA New

allowed **Taz** to enter into his ECW stable, which had previously consisted of only **Sabu** and **Rob Van Dam**. Both Sabu and Van Dam have hated Taz for years, but they all agree that's in the past. ECW heavyweight champion **Shane Douglas** thinks it's all a ruse on Taz' part. "He's just trying to get in and then strike when they least expect it," Douglas said. "I have a hard time believing that a manager with so much experience, a guy who once managed Taz, is falling for this."

Ernest Miller is really turning people off ... both in the ring and in the dressing room area. **Doug Dellinger**, head of security for WCW, reports that he has his hands full every time Miller is in the building.

"The guy has really cracked," Dellinger told me. "Used to be a nice, very polite, stay-to-himself kind of guy. Now he's breaking into meetings. In the executive offices backstage, he's trying to goad wrestlers into fights in the hallways. He thinks he's a young **Muhammad Ali** with that mouth of his. I've had to have him ejected from several arenas after his matches because he sticks around and yells, 'I am the greatest!' at the top of his lungs. That disrupts everyone, from the wrestlers to the members of the TV crew. The guy better calm down or you may see Doug Dellinger in the ring trying to shut him up!"

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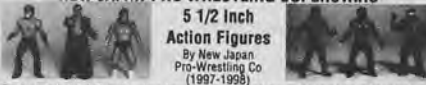
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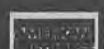
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Shawn Michaels #1



Shawn Michaels #2



Bret Hart #1



Bret Hart #2



Psycho Sid #1



Marc Mero #1



Owen Hart #1



British Bulldog #1



Goldust & Mariena #1

Marc Mero #1 (Adult only) Goldust & Mariena #1 (Adult Only)
Legion of Doom #1 (Adult only) Head Bangers #1 (Adult Only)



Legion of Doom



Headbangers

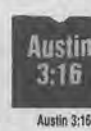


Steve Austin #1

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Austin 3:16



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Stone Cold



Austin 3:16 Smoking Skull



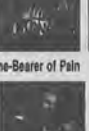
Dude Love



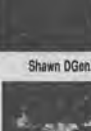
Raw is War



Austin Bottom Line



Kane-Bearer of Pain



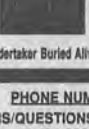
Shawn DGenX



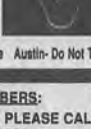
DGenX Logo



D-Generation X



Undertaker Buried Alive



Austin-Do Not Trust



Sable



Sham Rock

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are \$30.00 each

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NO HOLDS BARRED

(Continued from page 8)

Then, finally, he spoke.

Flair has been accused on occasion of cutting and pasting his famous clichés in long speeches. But on that night, he proved that he could be fresh, original, provocative, and oh-so-controversial. In a speech that was full of emotion and laced with expletives, Flair simply vented at his estranged boss. Foolishly, Eric Bischoff tried to confront the "Nature Boy," but he was rebuked by the fans and Flair himself.

Where it goes from here is anyone's guess. The legal battles probably are not over. This could turn out to be more of a cease-fire than a truce. But both sides recognized the importance of Flair's presence. As long as he is drawing breath, he will always draw excitement.

Forget the ratings. Forget the legal battles. For one night, the fans' demands were met. Ric Flair, a man who reminds many of what wrestling used to be like, showed us that he is still a major player. We're all hoping that he sticks around.

We got Flair. We finally got Flair.

I will confess that I really have not written much about Jim Duggan since my writing career started. Perhaps, like many, I took him for granted. He was a wrestling mainstay who played the important supporting role while others took the spotlight and the higher-profile matches. His name hasn't been in many headlines since he lost the U.S. title at the end of 1994.

But that is not to say that Jim Duggan did not accomplish a lot in his career. He most certainly did. In addition to that U.S. title reign, he was the King of the Ring in the WWF in 1989, UWF tag team

champ (with Terry Taylor) in 1986, Mid-South Wrestling North American champion in 1986, and a Mid-South tag team titleholder (with Magnum T.A.) in 1983. He also appeared in many of the WWF's biggest pay-per-views of the 1980s.

Jim Duggan has faced all of his battles head-on. He won some and lost some. But this summer, a bigger and much more dangerous foe loomed. That was cancer, specifically a tumor that had attached to his kidney. He faced the grim news with class and bravery, which shouldn't have come as a big surprise to anyone.

A heartfelt speech on WCW TV brought attention to his situation and forced us to look at the man, not the wrestler. He did not ask for anything but prayers. I am sure that he received his wish. At press time, Duggan was just beginning his recovery from successful surgery. His doctors told him all the cancerous cells were removed and that he won't need to undergo chemotherapy or radiation treatments.

A lot of people had been critical of Duggan during the last few years, but I just want to tell him that I appreciate his contribution to this great sport. He went from tearing up the old Mid-South/UWF territory to shining bright in the WWF to showing he still had something in WCW, and as a result, I think he has a solid place in wrestling history. If you would like to wish Jim Duggan well in his recovery, you can write him in



For more than a decade, Hacksaw Duggan has been using his two-by-four to battle some of the most vicious men in the sport. Now he has a much more serious battle on his hands.

care of this magazine, and we will be sure to pass your message on to him.

He might never wrestle again (though he won't rule out the possibility), but I think life is more important to Jim, his wife, and his children. Wrestling used to be his life, but I'm sure he could find something else to do and do it very well. If Jim is not able to return, WCW might make him a goodwill ambassador for the organization. Funny, I thought he already was that.

With thumbs up, a hearty "Hooooooo!", and a newfound appreciation for a courageous veteran, I wish Hacksaw all the best. Get well soon, tough guy. □



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CORRESPONDENTS REPORTS

(Continued from page 14)

Arena, and although he offered Dustin a lot of help and played a major role in the outcome, he did not leave the ring with Dustin. Someone who has been a much bigger part of Dustin's life did.

The fans were squarely behind Santana when the match started, and they cheered Tito as he went after Dustin while he was observing a moment of silence in a corner. Santana nailed Runnels with a quick series of rights and lefts to the midsection, then knocked him down with a hard right to the jaw. Runnels then quickly rolled outside the ring, but Santana followed him and rammed his head into the timekeeper's table. At that point, Glitter managed to distract Santana, so Tito turned his attention to the manager.

That proved to be a big mistake, as Runnels attacked him from behind and smashed his head into the timekeeper's table. When the action returned to the ring, Runnels maintained his advantage by whipping Santana hard into the corner. As Santana grabbed his back in pain, Runnels stomped him with his cowboy boots. Runnels then applied a tight chinlock, and Santana worked his way back to his feet.

Once back on his feet, Santana nailed Runnels with several hard elbows to the stomach to get free. Santana then bounced off the ropes and caught Runnels with a flying tackle. Luckily for Runnels, he was close to the ropes, so Glitter was able to grab his leg and drape it over the bottom rope. The referee noticed Runnels' foot on the rope and ordered the match to continue. As Santana argued with Glitter, though, Runnels rolled up his opponent and got the three-count.

After the match, Marlena, Dustin's wife, came to the ring and confronted Glitter. She argued with him outside the ring as Runnels watched from inside the ropes. Marlena responded to Glitter's

insults by slapping the manager across the face. Humiliated, Glitter demanded that Runnels make a choice: Either leave the ring with him or leave with Marlena. To the cheers of the fans, Runnels chose Marlena. Dustin and Marlena talked briefly, then embraced in the ring and left the building together.

In other bouts: Jimmy Snuka pinned King Kong Bundy (managed by Jimmy the Geek) ... Nikolai Volkoff pinned The Mad Russian ... John Rambo beat Lumberjack Jake Molson in a ladder match to win the WSWF heavy-weight title ... Johnny Glitter pinned WTPA deejay Randy "Rock" Johnson in a hair vs. hair match (Jim Cornette was special referee) ... Chippin' Dale pinned Perfect Creation ... WSWF tag team champions The Grungers defeated The Love Connection ... Vincent Goodnite upset The Hungarian Barbarian.

Warwick, RI (Correspondent—Lindsay Ryan): The feud between DeGeneration X and The Nation has really escalated in recent months. Their battle for control of the WWF continued during this match between Jesse James and Billy Gunn and Rocky Maivia and D-Lo Brown.

James and Gunn brought newly crowned Intercontinental champ Hunter Hearst Helmsley and Chyna to the ring with them. Former I-C champ Maivia, D-Lo, and Mark Henry, who was also at ringside for the match, weren't at all happy about that. They also didn't appreci-



Rocky Maivia and D-Lo Brown look tough and talk tough before tag team matches, but they appeared to be a little off once the bell rang to start a recent match they had with The New Age Outlaws in Rhode Island.

ate Helmsley mooning them before the match started.

Although both teams had strong backup, the match was free of outside interference. Both teams held the advantage several times throughout the match, but James and Gunn gained the mental advantage as the crowd was cheering for them the entire match. It broke down into a four-man brawl only a few times. In the end, it was Gunn getting the clean pin on D-Lo.

In other bouts: The Headbangers defeated Brian Christopher & Scott Taylor ... Giant Silva pinned Shawn Stasiak ... Bradshaw defeated Darren Drozdov ... Val Venis defeated Marc Mero ... Luna Vachon pinned Jacquelyn ... Ken Shamrock beat Mark Henry by submission ... Southern Justice beat Faarooq & 2 Cold Scorpio ... Vader beat Kane by disqualification. □

Send your reports to:
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(Continued from page 16)

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Wrestler

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March 1979: Backlund vs. Ladd: Did Bruno's "Interference" Cost Ladd The WWWF Title? Also: Angelo Mosca, Dick Murdoch, Peter Maivia, Bob Orton Jr., Backwinkel-Rhodes, Brisco-Race, Crusher Blackwell, Lewin-T. Funk
May 1979: Paul Jones-Rick Steamboat Feud: Who Is Really To Blame? Also: Valiant, Jack Brisco, Larry Hennig, Johnson-King, Lanza-Mulligan, Chief Jay Strongbow, Snuka-Patera.
July 1979: Ernie Ladd's Claim: "Mr. Wrestling II Uses A Loaded Mask!" Also: Backlund-Race, Andre-Baker, Bruno Sammartino, Nick Backwinkel, Dick Slater, Sonny King, Valiant, Stan Hansen.
Sept. 1979: A New—And Deadly—Feud For Rick Steamboat. Also: Roddy Piper, Superstar Graham, Backlund-Brower, Cyclone Negro, Greg Gagne, The Bruiser-Brody, Dino Bravo, Mil Mascaras, Hussein Arab.
March 1980: Bruno Sammartino: "I Know The Secret That Could End Bob Backlund's Reign!" Also: Ric Flair, Andre-Brody, Blackjack Mulligan, Bobby Heenan, Murdoch-Race, Mr. Wrestling II, Nick Backwinkel.
April 1980: Did Ken Patera Destroy Dusty Rhodes' Bionic Elbow? Also: Terry Funk, Kevin Von Erich, DiBiase-Backlund, Backwinkel & Heenan, Baba-Race, Mr. Wrestling II, Youngblood & Steamboat.
Aug. 1980: The Reign Of Bloodshed Begins: Stevens & Valentine Win The NWA Tag Team Title! Also: Kerry Von Erich, Backlund & Skaland, Nick Backwinkel, Zbyszko-Bruno, Keim-Muraco, Samoans, Wrestling II-Idol.
June 1981: Bruno Sammartino: "I Want To Break Stan Hansen's Neck!" Also: Ted DiBiase, Garea & Martel, Mike Graham, Mongolian Stomper, Piper-Superstar, Verne Gagne, Tommy Rich.
Sept. 1980: Why Ernie Ladd Says ... "I'm Tired Of Being Your King." Also: Rick Steamboat, Mad Dog Vachon, Bugsy McGraw, Patera-Patterson, Manny Fernandez, Bob Backlund, Greg Gagne, Mike Sharpe.
Oct. 1980: Kevin Von Erich Wins The Missouri Title From Kevin Von Erich! Also: Mr. Wrestling II, Pedro Morales, Superstar Graham, Dusty Rhodes, Idol-Pace, Rick McGraw.
Feb. 1981: Larry Zbyszko's Claim: "Tony Garea Begged Me Not To Hurt Him!" Also: The Grappler, Race-Patera, Hussein Arab, Humberdink-Rhodes, Gilberts, Mr. Wrestling II, Bravo-Backwinkel.
Jan. 1982: Rich vs. Masked Superstar: Can Tommy Rich Survive As Georgia's Last Hero? Also: Kiwis, Backwinkel-Atlas, Mascaras-Steamboat, Sullivan-Taylor, Bruno Sammartino.
March 1982: U.S. Champion Slaughter vs. Former NWA Champion Race: How Harley Race's Attempt To Win An "Easy" Title Ended In Disaster. Also: Jimmy Snuka, Flair-Idol, Steve Keim, Steamboat-Patterson, Fuji-Albano-Saito, Bruno Sammartino Jr., Bruiser-Sullivan.
Aug. 1982: Nick Backwinkel: "Tommy Rich Is Too Stupid To Be Champion!" Also: Putski-Adonis, Blackjack Mulligan Jr., Roddy Piper, Rick Steamboat, Lawler-Kaufman, Mike Graham.
April 1982: How Jack Brisco Controls Ric Flair's Championship Destiny. Also: Tito Santana, Valentine-Atlas, Bob Roop, Armstrongs, John Studd, Eric Embry.
June 1982: Ric Flair vs. Rick Steamboat: How The NWA Belt Strangled Wrestling's Greatest Friendship. Also: Piper-Armstrong, Hussein Arab, Bruno Sammartino, Adonis & Ventura, Butch Reed.
July 1982: Harley Race—His Destiny Is In The Hands Of Tommy Rich. Also: Rick Steamboat, Chief Jay Strongbow, Buzz Sawyer, Ric Flair, Roddy Piper.
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Hogan.
Dec. 1982: Morales vs. Snuka: Does Pedro Deserve To Be Intercontinental Champion? Also: Bob Orton Jr., Kimble, Rich & Rhodes, Barry Windham, Ted DiBiase, JYD-Backwinkel, Oliver Humberdink.
Feb. 1983: Exclusive Coverage: Nick Backwinkel Regains The AWA Title From Otto Wanz. Also: Backlund-Graham, Rich-Sawyer, Barry Windham, Martel & Garea, McDaniel & Piper, Kamala.
May 1983: What Will Happen When The Samoans Become Too Smart For Capt. Lou Albano? Also: Tommy Rich, Terry Allen, Eddie Gilbert, Kerry-Race, Ladd & Rhodes, Flair-Orndorff.
June 1983: Flair-Windham Match Spurs Controversy: Should The NWA Champion Be Allowed To Choose His Challengers? Also: Ivan Koloff, Bruiser Brody, Kerry Von Erich, Andre-Kamala, Brazil-Valentine, Gagnies-Martel.
July 1983: Ric Flair: "I Wrestle The Men Backlund Is Afraid Of." Also: Putski-Adonis, Kevin Sullivan, Bob Roop, Martel-Heenan.
Sept. 1983: Nick Backwinkel Forces Hulk Hogan Into Exile: And Only The Fans Can Bring Him Back. Also: Brisco, Blackwell-Kerry-Race, Paul Ellering, Mulligan & Windham.
Nov. 1983: Target—Harley Race! Can Dusty Rhodes Fulfill His American Dream A Third Time? Also: Rick Rude, Rolando-Kabuki, Gagne & Brunzell, Tito Santana, Von Erichs-Freebirds.
Dec. 1983: The Night The AWA World Title Was Stolen From Mil Mascaras. Also: Roddy Piper, Larry Zbyszko, Dino Bravo, Fabulous Ones, Gann & Sunshine.
March 1984: Is Tito Santana Trying To Blackmail The WWF? Also: Wayne & Sawyer, Hogan-Race, David Von Erich, Jesse Ventura.
June 1984: David Von Erich—We'll Never Forget You. Also: Billy Jack, Flair-Race, Backwinkel-Bravo, Brickhouse Brown.
Aug. 1984: Garvin vs. Roberts: "Hands Of Stone" Crushes "The Snake." Also: Freebirds-Destruction Inc., Sawyer-Sullivan, Lawler & Dillon, McDaniel-Race.
Sept. 1984: Kerry Von Erich Wins The NWA Title: For David ... For Texas ... For Wrestling! Also: Billy Jack, Bundy & Superstar-Road Warriors, Piper & Orndorff-Johnson & Atlas, Rick Martel.
Nov. 1984: The \$50,000 Full-Nelson Challenge Match: Billy Jack Gets Revenge Against Superstar Graham. Also: Piper-Hogan, Heenan & Saito, Brody & Hanson, Von Erichs.
Dec. 1984: The Tully Blanchard-Rick Steamboat Feud: Will Dusty Rhodes End It ... Or Make It Worse? Also: Tito Santana, Martel-Atlas, D. Funk, Mike Von Erich, Williams-Taylor.
Jan. 1985: Kerry Von Erich: "I've Got Ric Flair's NWA Title Within My Grasp." Also: Albano & Lauper, Koloffs & Kemdler, Road Warriors, Lawler & Rude, Scott McGhee.
April 1985: Six-Man Flirt Road Warriors & Ellering vs. Rhodes, Rich, & Anderson. Also: Tonga Kid, tomorrow's stars, Adams-Kevin, Flair-Kick, Terminators.
June 1985: Are The WWF Rulebreakers Singing Out Barry Windham For Destruction? Also: Zbyszko-Backlund, Rhodes-Blanchard, Tommy Rich, Oliver-Haynes.
July 1985: It's A Dog's Life ... And Junkyard Dog Wouldn't Trade It With Anyone! Also: Backlund-Martel, Kemdler-Koloff, Butch Reed, Hernandez & Sunshine, Mike Graham.
Aug. 1985: Ten Days Of Blood And Glory: The Road Warriors Invade Japan! Also: Terry Taylor, Magnum T.A., Bugsy McGraw, Sheik & Volkoff-Windham & Rotundo, 20th anniversary.
Oct. 1985: David Schultz Gets An NWA Title Shot: Ric Flair—"I Wrestle The Men Hulk Hogan Is Afraid Of!" Also: Misty Blue, Rick Martel, Kendall Windham, George Steele, Killer Brooks, wrestling greats' all-time top 10.
June 1986: Kerry Reveals His Secret: "I've Told Magnum T.A. How To Beat Ric Flair!" Also: Steve Williams, Hogan-Orton, Flair-

Backwinkel, Lex Luger.
Nov. 1986: Morton & Gibson Take A Trip To Badstreet U.S.A.: The Rock 'n' Roll Express vs. The Freebirds. Also: Eddie Gilbert, Hogan-Orndorff, Mike Von Erich, Mulligan-Bass.
Dec. 1986: Ric Flair's NWA Title Reign: Last Chance To Silence The Critics! Also: Nikita Koloff, Gilbert & Sting, Hogan-Piper, Abdullah-Adams, Nick Backwinkel.
Feb. 1987: Tragedy Strikes Wrestling: Magnum T.A. Needs Your Prayers Now More Than Ever. Also: Roberts-Steamboat, Crusher Yurkof, Terry Gordy, Wendell Cooley.
March 1987: Ivan & Khrushchev's Kremlin Orders: Crush Nikita Koloff's Russian Revolution! Also: Barry Windham, One Man Gang, Brian Adias, Savage-Steamboat, Jimmy Snuka.
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Oct. 1987: The Honky Tonk Man Wins The Intercontinental Title: Is Randy Savage The Fans' Last Hope. Also: Kerry Von Erich, Ken Patera, Sting-Gilbert, Horsemen-Freebirds, Zbyszko-Gagne.
Dec. 1987: Hulk Hogan: Will He Be Drowned By The New Wave Of Challengers? Also: Hennig-Lawler, Windham-Steiner, Flair-Williams, Brutus Beefcake, Ronnie Garvin.
Jan. 1988: The Experts Agree: The Road Warriors Will Turn Bad In 1988! Also: Koloff-Taylor, Curt Hennig, Duggan-DiBiase.
Feb. 1988: Ric Flair Admits: "I'm Nothing Without The NWA Belt!" Also: Kerry Von Erich, Jim Cornette, Hogan-Andre, Hennig-Lawler, Terry Taylor.
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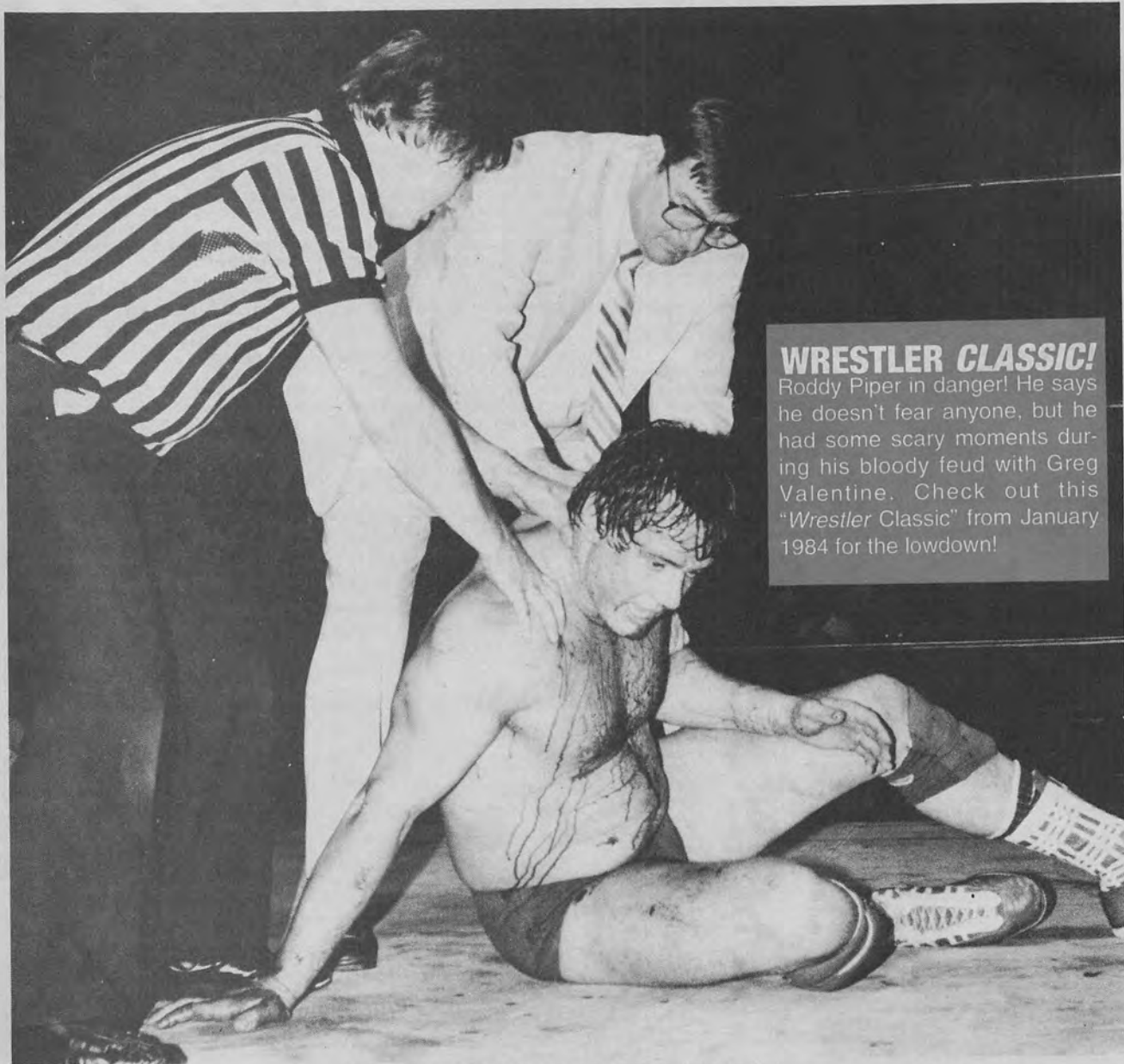
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Roddy Piper Is Risking His Life

THIS KILLER FEUD WITH GREG VALENTINE MUST BE STOPPED!



WRESTLER CLASSIC!

Roddy Piper in danger! He says he doesn't fear anyone, but he had some scary moments during his bloody feud with Greg Valentine. Check out this "Wrestler Classic" from January 1984 for the lowdown!



Piper is aided by referee Ron West and NWA official Sandy Scott after sustaining the serious injury to his left ear (opposite page). His plans to avenge that night in April when Valentine took 75 percent of his hearing and his U.S. title have been dangerously unsuccessful (above and below).



Obsessed with making Greg Valentine pay for the injustice of stealing his U.S. heavyweight title, Roddy Piper is risking more than just his hearing by getting involved in a feud with "The Hammer."

Piper's very life is being threatened, and until he understands that fully, the threat is a very real one

"EVERY TIME I try to rest my head on a pillow at night, every time I have to ask someone to repeat what they said, every time I go to the supermarket and see a box of Q-Tips, I think about that night."

There is anger and resentment in the voice of Roddy Piper as he speaks about the injury inflicted upon him by Greg Valentine that cost him 75 percent of the hearing in his left ear—and the U.S. heavyweight championship.

"It was a completely unfair decision," Piper said. "I've had lawyers crawling all over [NWA official] Sandy Scott's offices for months, because it's all his fault, but they haven't been able to do a thing about it yet. And so far, [NWA President Bob] Geigel doesn't want to hear anything about it, either."

Scott was sitting at ringside in Greensboro, North Carolina, on April 30 as Valentine, the U.S. heavyweight title challenger, opened a wide gash on Piper's left

ear. Determining that Piper was unable to continue, Scott intervened, stopped the match, and awarded the match and the belt to Valentine.

"It's totally unfair, I tell you, it's not right, it just isn't right!" Piper's voice seems to rise as high as his emotions when he speaks of the incident. "I lose half my hearing, maybe permanently, I don't know. The doctors are still waiting to see what happens, and I lose my belt, and there's Greg Valentine, running

around with the grin of the Cheshire Cat on his face and *my belt around his waist*. I didn't get pinned and I didn't submit. And as far as I know, those are the only two ways you can lose a title."

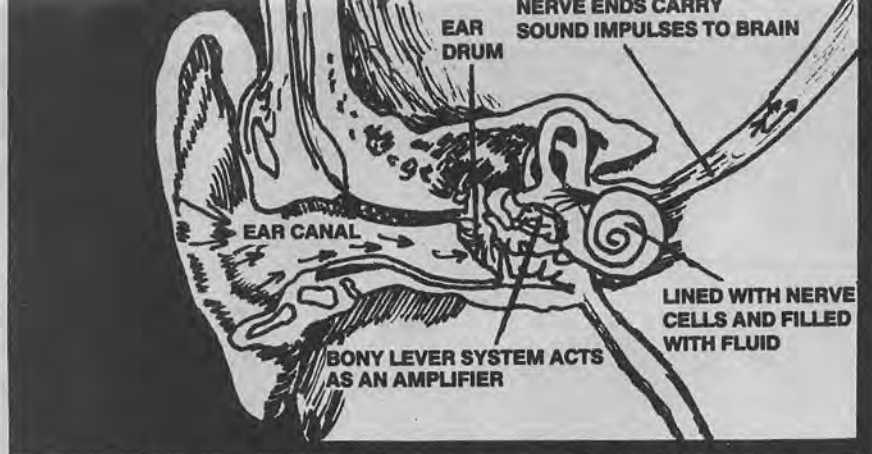
It's long past the point where I'm going to just let my lawyers work on this," Piper said. "It's time to take matters into my own hands, it's time I deal with the situation the best way I know how—with my fists. Valentine's got a couple of knuckle sandwiches on his menu, and I'm ready to serve them up, jack, anytime!"



Piper's been spending the past weeks doing exactly that. In South Carolina, Virginia, North Carolina—all across the Mid-Atlantic area—Piper's been following Valentine. His campaign has not been a successful one, however. He has failed to recapture the U.S. belt, and he's taken a severe beating every time he's stepped into the ring with Valentine. Piper's close friends and fans are worried about Roddy's apparent obsession. The very injury that precipitated this bloody feud could cost Piper more than a few more numbers in the loss column of his record.

The Wrestler recently spoke to Dr. Frederick Mitlitsky of the San Francisco Center for Aural Physiology.

A specialist in athletic injuries, Dr. Mitlitsky was already familiar with the Piper situation when we



This diagram shows the complex makeup of the human ear. If Roddy Piper has sustained damage to the inner ear, he stands the risk of suffering dizzy spells while wrestling. Valentine (below) would not be reluctant to take advantage of such a situation.

contacted him.

"I have several friends who have been asking me about Piper's injury," Dr. Mitlitsky said. "The odd thing about it is that this type of injury is very unpredictable. The ear is a vastly complex system of bones, nerves, and fluids.

"Some people have said that Piper's eardrum is punctured," Dr. Mitlitsky continued. "I don't know, I haven't examined him. But if that's the case, Piper could have some serious problems. The inside of the eardrum is connected to a lever system of very tiny and sensitive bones. These bones transfer vibrations in the air that are reflected on the eardrum—sounds—to a snail-shaped structure in the inner ear that contains fluid and nerve cells that carry those sound impulses to the brain. That's how people are able to hear.

"Those fluid channels inside the inner ear are lined with tiny hairs called cilia that move as the individual person moves," Dr. Mitlitsky continued. "These hairs are connected to nerves that send signals to the brain. Very simply stated, if a person is standing up, the hairs are in one position, they send particular messages to the brain, and the brain understands from those messages that a person is standing up. If a person is leaning to one side, the hairs are in a different position, and the brain understands that because of a different set of nerve messages. That's how the

brain maintains balance in the body.

"But if there is an injury to the inner ear, if the fluid surrounding the cilia is affected, a person's balance can be destroyed. Quite simply, the individual just doesn't know which way is up."

"Piper has occasionally complained of some dizziness," Dr. Mitlitsky observed, "but not on a regular basis. This could well mean that he's walking a tightrope between a permanent inner ear injury and saving his hearing—and his balance."

Dr. Mitlitsky's expert analysis leaves out one important factor: Greg Valentine. If Piper should become dizzy in the middle of a match, he would become virtually helpless and automatically vulnerable to all forms of sadistic attacks by The Hammer. Such attacks could injure Piper's ear further—possibly doing enough damage that Piper's inner ear could be permanently mutilated.

Should that happen, Piper would never be able to wrestle again. The vocation to which he's dedicated his entire life would be taken away from him. It would be a tragedy that could not be reversed.

By continuing this feud with Greg Valentine, Roddy Piper is risking his life. If he wants to be certain that his wrestling career will continue, he should end this feud immediately and allow himself to heal.

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Wrestling historians, rejoice! Some of the back issues in this ad have not been offered for sale for more than a decade—but a recent transfer of warehouse inventory from New York to Pennsylvania uncovered a small supply of these classic publications! Obviously, supplies are extremely limited, so all magazines will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis only. Prices quoted are based on the rarity of the issue and the number of available copies. For speediest service, use VISA or MasterCard or make payment by money order or certified check. Please don't send cash! Don't miss out on this once-in-a-lifetime chance to own a memorable piece of wrestling history! Once they're gone, they'll never be offered for sale again—so order today!

WRESTLING REVUE

Published between 1959 and 1964, *Wrestling Revue* is acknowledged as one of the finest series of wrestling magazines ever produced. These beautiful editions, all edited and published by Stanley Weston (founder of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*, *The Wrestler*, and *Inside Wrestling*, among so many other titles) set a standard for all wrestling magazines that followed, and are available now for the first time in many years!

Fall 1961 Edouard Carpentier challenges Floyd Patterson, Bruiser vs. Cowboy Bob Ellis, The Zebra Kid, killer holds, action at The Kiel, Nick Bockwinkel vs. Dr. X, and full-color action of the Bastiens vs. Shires & Nelson. **\$25**

December 1961 An extensive Buddy Rogers interview, Bobo Brazil, Fred Blassie, Pepper Gomez, the Torres brothers, Whipper Watson, "Sailor" Art Thomas, Ricki Starr, plus a full-color centerfold of Mark Lewin & Don Curtis. **\$35**

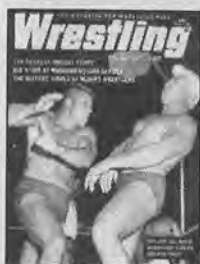
February 1962 Dick Beyer, Mitsuo Arakawa, Edouard Carpentier vs. Lou Thesz, Angelo Poffo, a five-girl battle royal, Don and Jackie Fargo, Billy Zabyszko, Larry Chene, plus a full-color centerfold of Guy & Joe Brunetti. **\$30**

April 1962 Wilbur Snyder, Luis Martinez, Madison Square Garden closeup, Yulie Brynner, Billy Wolfe, Don Leo Jonathan vs. Pat O'Connor, closeup on midgets, plus a full-color centerfold of Bearcat Wright. **\$30**

June 1962 Eddie Graham, Verne Gagne, wrestlers vs. boxers, Dory Dixon, Yukon Eric, Tony Lanza, Lorraine Johnson vs. Kay Noble, Skull Murphy & Brute Bernard, The Crusher, plus a full-color centerfold of Red Bastien. **\$25**

December 1963 The Destroyer, "Maniac" Mark Lewin, Paul Diamond, Ernie Ladd, Judy Grable, Bill Watts, Pat O'Connor, Don Duff, The Scufflin' Hillbillies, plus a full-color centerfold of Lou Thesz. **\$35**

February 1964 Edouard Carpentier vs. Killer Kowalski, Florida wrestling, Mad Dog Vachon, Fabulous Moolah, Fritz Von Erich, Rene Goulet, Cyclops, plus a full-color centerfold of Bruno Sammartino. **\$35**



BOXING ILLUSTRATED/ WRESTLING NEWS



In November 1958, Stanley Weston launched *Boxing Illustrated/Wrestling News*, an innovative concept in sports magazines. Each issue's content consisted of approximately 60 percent boxing and 40 percent wrestling, resulting in the most complete magazine for ring aficionados the world has ever known.

May 1959 Boxing: Ray Robinson, James Jeffries, Rube Vargas, Willie Pep, Joey Maxim, Denny Moyer. **Wrestling:** Gene Stanlee, Larry Hamilton, Happy Humphrey, "Cowboy" Bob Ellis. **\$25**

June 1959 Boxing: Gene Fullmer, Jack Britton, Gustav Scholz, Mauro Vazquez, Rocky Graziano. **Wrestling:** Buddy Rogers, Don Leo Jonathan, Hard Boiled Haggerty, Omaya Kato. **\$35**

September 1959 Boxing: Carmen Basilio, the perfect kayo, Tiger Flowers, Joe Brown, Paolo Rosi. **Wrestling:** Edouard Carpentier, Ricki Starr, Enrique Torres. **\$25**

October 1962 Boxing: Special edition previewing the Floyd Patterson vs. Sonny Liston bout! **Wrestling:** "Handsome" Johnny Barend, Andre Drapp, "Sailor" Art Thomas, five pages of results. **\$30**

October 1963 Boxing: Cassius Clay, Joe Lynch, Frankie Narvaez, Tommy Loughran. **Wrestling:** Crusher vs. Verne Gagne, Tony Manous, The Dirty Daltons, results. **\$25**

February 1964 Boxing: Sonny Liston, Joey Archer, 1963 in review, Cassius Clay. **Wrestling:** Bruno Sammartino vs. Gorilla Monsoon, Emile Dupre, Bruiser vs. Bob Ellis, results. **\$30**

COLLECTOR'S CORNER WRESTLING REVUE

- ☐ Fall 1961
- ☐ December 1961
- ☐ February 1962
- ☐ April 1962
- ☐ June 1962
- ☐ December 1963
- ☐ February 1964

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Wrestler

TOP 10

- 1 STEVE AUSTIN**
252, Victoria, TX
(1) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
- 2 BILL GOLDBERG**
270, Tulsa, OK
(2) WCW World champion
- 3 BRET HART**
235, Calgary, Alberta
(4) WCW U.S. champion
- 4 THE UNDERTAKER**
328, parts unknown
(8) No. 3 contender: WWF World title
- 5 HOLLYWOOD HOGAN**
275, Venice Beach, CA
(-) No. 2 contender: WWF World title
- 6 KANE**
345, parts unknown
(-) No. 4 contender: WWF World title
- 7 DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
260, Tampa, FL
(7) No. 4 contender: WCW World title
- 8 ROCKY MAIVIA**
272, Miami, FL
(-) No. 5 contender: WWF World title
- 9 LEX LUGER**
265, Chicago, IL
(9) No. 7 contender: WCW World title
- 10 MANKIND**
277, Truth or Consequences, NM
(-) No. 6 contender: WWF World title



Kane

TAG TEAMS

- 1 SABU & ROB VAN DAM**
Combined weight: 447 pounds
(2) ECW tag team champions
- 2 BILLY GUNN & JESSE JAMES**
Combined weight: 496 pounds
(1) WWF World tag team champions
- 3 LEX LUGER & KEVIN NASH**
Combined weight: 621 pounds
(-) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title
- 4 TOSHIAKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE**
Combined weight: 510 pounds
(4) All-Japan International tag team champions
- 5 SHIRO KOSHINAKA & GENICHIRO TENRYU**
Combined weight: 555 pounds
(3) IWGP tag team champions
- 6 BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY**
Combined weight: 585 pounds
(6) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title
- 7 EIGHT-BALL & SKULL**
Combined weight: 517 pounds
(8) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 8 STEVEN DUNN & RENO RIGGINS**
Combined weight: 471 pounds
(9) NWA North American tag team champions
- 9 THE HEADBANGERS**
Combined weight: 488 pounds
(-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title
- 10 BRIAN CHRISTOPHER & SCOTT TAYLOR**
Combined weight: 433 pounds
(-) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

WCW

World Champion:
BILL GOLDBERG
(C) 270, Tulsa, OK

- 1—BRET HART**
(1) 235, Calgary, Alberta
- 2—HOLLYWOOD HOGAN**
(-) 275, Venice Beach, CA
- 3—STING**
(4) 260, Venice Beach, CA
- 4—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE**
(3) 260, Tampa, FL
- 5—CHRIS JERICO**
(2) 225, Vancouver, British Columbia
- 6—JUVENTUD GUERRERA**
(6) 165, Mexico City, Mexico
- 7—LEX LUGER**
(5) 265, Chicago, IL
- 8—BILLY KIDMAN**
(-) 195, Allentown, PA
- 9—DEAN MALENKO**
(-) 216, Tampa, FL
- 10—STEVIE RAY**
(9) 265, Harlem, NY

WWF

World Champion:
TITLE VACANT

- 1—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY**
(1) 279, Greenwich, CT
- 2—STEVE AUSTIN**
(C) 241, Dallas, TX
- 3—THE UNDERTAKER**
(2) 328, parts unknown
- 4—KANE**
(-) 345, parts unknown
- 5—ROCKY MAIVIA**
(3) 272, Miami, FL
- 6—MANKIND**
(10) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM
- 7—D-LO BROWN**
(8) 285, Bronx, NY
- 8—X-PAC**
(6) 212, Minneapolis, MN
- 9—KEN SHAMROCK**
(4) 235, San Bernardino, CA
- 10—THE EDGE**
(-) 240, Toronto, Ontario

NWA

NWA Champion:
DAN SEVERN
(C) 265, Detroit, MI

- 1—COLORADO KID**
(1) 231, Denver, CO
- 2—BARRY WINDHAM**
(8) 273, Sweetwater, TX
- 3—DOUG GILBERT**
(7) 241, Lexington, TN
- 4—STEVIE RICHARDS**
(3) 227, Philadelphia, PA
- 5—AL SNOW**
(-) 232, Lima, OH
- 6—MR. GILLIS**
(-) 221, Vancouver, British Columbia
- 7—DORY FUNK JR.**
(10) 250, Amarillo, TX
- 8—ACTION JACKSON**
(9) 300, Dallas, TX
- 9—SID VICIOUS**
(-) 318, West Memphis, AR
- 10—STEVEN REGAL**
(-) 247, Blackpool, England

ECW

ECW Champion:
SHANE DOUGLAS
(C) 240, Pittsburgh, PA

- 1—ROB VAN DAM**
(1) 227, Battle Creek, MI
- 2—SABU**
(-) 220, Bombay
- 3—TAZ**
(2) 248, Red Hook, NY
- 4—CHRIS CANDIDO**
(4) 226, Carteret, NJ
- 5—MASATO TANAKA**
(5) 235, Tokyo, Japan
- 6—SPIKE DUDLEY**
(9) 155, parts unknown
- 7—JUSTIN CREDIBLE**
(8) 225, Waterbury, CT
- 8—BAM BAM BIGELOW**
(6) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ
- 9—JERRY LYNN**
(-) 214, Minneapolis, MN
- 10—TOMMY DREAMER**
(7) 245, Yonkers, NY

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board.

All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue while (C) indicates the wrestler was champion in that category last issue.

For period ended October 6, 1998

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN WRESTLING: Champion—Eight-Ball Jones; 1—Skyfire; 2—Donnie Dallas; 3—Bill Justice; 4—Allen King; 5—Eddie Golden; 6—Scott Sturgis; 7—Ricky Harrison; 8—Bryan Wayne; 9—Scott Sterling; 10—Billy King.

EAST COAST WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—Christian Cage; 1—Inferno Kid; 2—Reckless Youth; 3—Lance Diamond; 4—Glen Osbourne; 5—Devon Storm; 6—Ace Darling; 7—Mr. Ooh La La; 8—Mark Shrader; 9—Shawn Stasiak; 10—Andrew Martin.

EASTERN WRESTLING FEDERATION: Champion—Adam Flash; 1—Hungarian Barbarian; 2—Danny Rose; 3—Brian Knobs; 4—George Anthony; 5—Little Running Bear; 6—Jack Molson; 7—George Steele; 8—Bob Starr; 9—Jay Love; 10—Flamingo Kid.

ETERNITY WRESTLING ASSOCIATION: Champion—Billy Rivell; 1—Tommy Force; 2—Darren Ryan; 3—3-D; 4—Tito Santana; 5—Demolition Ax; 6—King Kong Bundy; 7—Cousin Luke; 8—Rik Ratchet; 9—Dr. Hurtz; 10—Tom Brandi.

FRONTIER MARTIAL ARTS WRESTLING: Champion—Hayabusa; 1—Hiromichi Fuyuki; 2—Hisakatsu Oya; 3—Atsushi Onita; 4—Masato Tanaka; 5—Jado; 6—Gedo; 7—The Gladiator; 8—Koji Nakagawa; 9—Yukihiko Kanemura; 10—Tetsuo Kuroda.

MID-SOUTH PROMOTIONS: Champion—Mr. Wrestling III; 1—One Man Gang; 2—Kevin Northcutt; 3—Redd Dogg; 4—Casey Blaze; 5—John Saxon;

6—Mercury McCloud; 7—Mr. Nasty; 8—Kent Truth; 9—Kerry Rockwood; 10—Terry Bryant.

MUSIC CITY WRESTLING: Champion—Colorado Kid; 1—Flash Flanagan; 2—Al Snow; 3—Shane Eden; 4—Wolfie D; 5—Bart Sawyer; 6—Brickhouse Brown; 7—Robert Gibson; 8—Reno Riggins; 9—Steven Dunn; 10—Jason Gibson.

NEW DIMENSION WRESTLING: Champion—Tully Blanchard; 1—Rick Link; 2—Rick Morton; 3—Manny Fernandez; 4—Bobby Fulton; 5—Pez Whatley; 6—Jackie Fulton; 7—Jimmy Valiant; 8—Rikki Nelson; 9—Madd Maxx; 10—Surge.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Julio Sanchez; 1—Reckless Youth; 2—Don Montoya; 3—Mike Quackenbush; 4—The Edge; 5—Chris Krueger; 6—Glen Osbourne; 7—Lance Diamond; 8—Flash Flanagan; 9—Armageddon; 10—Mr. Ooh La La.

POWER PRO WRESTLING: Champion—Title Vacant; 1—Jerry Lawler; 2—Bill Dundee; 3—Brian Christopher; 4—Psycho Sid; 5—Billy Travis; 6—Streak; 7—Kid Wikkid; 8—Derrick King; 9—Lance Jade; 10—Blade.

PRO WRESTLING FEDERATION: Champion—Italian Stallion; 1—George South; 2—Ripper; 3—Black Angel; 4—Super Ninja; 5—The Baron; 6—The Breeze; 7—The Bodyguard; 8—American G.I.; 9—Flaming Youth; 10—Cruel Connection II.

SOUTHERN CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING: Champion—Poison Ivey; 1—Otto Schwanz; 2—Boris Dragoff; 3—Cueball Carmichael; 4—C.W. Anderson; 5—Toad; 6—Major DeBeers; 7—Big Slam; 8—Matt Hardy; 9—Chris Stephenson; 10—Buddy Landell.

NEW JAPAN

IWGP Champion:

SCOTT NORTON

(-) 360, Minneapolis, MN

1—YUJI NAGATA

(9) 220, Tokyo, Japan

2—SHINYA HASHIMOTO

(1) 287, Gisu, Japan

3—KEIJI MUTO

(5) 245, Tokyo, Japan

4—KENSUKE SASAKI

(2) 233, Tokyo, Japan

5—HIROYOSHI TENZAN

(4) 270, Tokyo, Japan

6—GENICHIRO TENRYU

(-) 235, Fukui, Japan

7—TATSUMI FUJINAMI

(3) 234, Oita, Japan

8—JUSHIN LIGER

(8) 206, Hiroshima, Japan

9—SHINJIRO OTANI

(10) 215, Yokohama, Japan

10—SHIRO KOSHINAKA

(6) 225, Tokyo, Japan

ALL-JAPAN

Triple Crown Champion:

KENTA KOBASHI

(C) 261, Tokyo, Japan

1—MITSU HARU MISAWA

(4) 228, Saitama, Japan

2—TOSHI AKI KAWADA

(2) 245, Tizhigi, Japan

3—JUN AKIYAMA

(1) 230, Hiroshima, Japan

4—AKIRA TAUE

(3) 265, Tokyo, Japan

5—JOHNNY ACE

(6) 250, San Bernardino, CA

6—STAN HANSEN

(-) 322, Borger, TX

7—JINSEI SHINZAKI

(-) 223, Tokyo, Japan

8—TAKAO OMORI

(7) 221, Tokyo, Japan

9—YOSHINARI OGAWA

(10) 202, Fichigi, Japan

10—JOHNNY SMITH

(-) 235, Manchester, England

EMLL

EMLL Champion:

RAYO DE JALISCO JR.

(-) 270, Guadalajara, Mexico

1—APOLO DANTES

(-) 215, Guadalajara, Mexico

2—NEGRO CASAS

(3) 175, Mexico City, Mexico

3—EL HIJO DEL SANTO

(2) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico

4—DR. WAGNER JR.

(6) 215, Mexico City, Mexico

5—BLUE PANTHER

(4) 215, Mexico City, Mexico

6—VILLANO IV

(10) 198, Naucalpan, Mexico

7—MIGUEL PEREZ JR.

(-) 232, San Juan, Puerto Rico

8—KEVIN QUINN

(-) 210, Chicago, IL

9—FUERZA GUERRERA

(-) 180, Mexico City, Mexico

10—RICKY SANTANA

(-) 239, San Juan, Puerto Rico

AAA

AAA Champion:

PERRO AGUAYO

(C) 220, Zacatecas, Mexico

1—ABISMO NEGRO

(1) 210, Pachuca, Mexico

2—HEAVY METAL

(2) 180, Mexico City, Mexico

3—BLUE DEMON JR.

(10) 180, Toluca, Mexico

4—PENTAGON

(4) 175, Pachuca, Mexico

5—OCTAGON

(7) 180, Monterrey, Mexico

6—LATIN LOVER

(5) 190, Monterrey, Mexico

7—PERRO AGUAYO JR.

(6) 165, Zacatecas, Mexico

8—MANIACO

(-) 210, Mexico City, Mexico

9—CIBERNETICO

(-) 235, Mexico City, Mexico

10—LUDXOR

(9) 170, Tijuana, Mexico

Ratings

ANALYSIS

A huge mess! Vince McMahon's judgment is obviously clouded by his hatred for "**Stone-Cold**" **Steve Austin**. Surely there is no other explanation for the damage his recent decisions



Kane

have caused the symbol of his federation, the WWF World heavyweight title belt. If you check the WWF ratings, you'll note that as of press time the title was in a state of vacancy. (The number-one contender remained **Hunter Hearst Helmsley**, in accordance with our mandate that the Intercontinental champion receive the top position after the champion.) But Austin, **The Undertaker**, and **Kane**, the men involved in that controversial Break Down pay-per-view were two, three, and four, respectively.

When 'Taker and Kane simultaneously pinned Austin at Break Down, we assumed that, for the first time ever, we'd have co-holders of the championship. Upon further review, McMahon saw to it that we had *no-holders* of the championship. McMahon appeared ready to present the belt to the half-brothers the following night on *Raw*, but after McMahon was attacked by Austin, and Kane and 'Taker didn't do much to protect him, he decided the title would be declared vacant. Kane and The Undertaker would have to wrestle each other later on for the title, with Austin serving as special referee. Like we said, a huge mess!

McMahon made his initial mistake by signing the three-way match at Break Down. We understand that he wants to get rid of Austin (again, clouded judgment at best), but he—and every other promoter—has to understand that you only devalue the prestige of a title by putting it up for grabs in anything but one-on-one encounters (see story on page 30). He could have gotten out of the situation gracefully by having Undertaker and Kane wrestle for the belt and offering the first crack to Austin. But we guess that makes too much sense.

Where are they? You might wonder why neither of ECW's singles champions has made our overall Top 10 this month.

There's a very simple and logical explanation for this decision: Neither **Shane Douglas**, the heavyweight titleholder, or **Rob Van Dam**, the TV champ, has proven himself worthy. Hold on a second. We really should explain that one in some detail.



Shane Douglas

Both are very talented wrestlers. They wouldn't be champions if that statement weren't true. But Douglas just came back from a serious elbow injury in September. When he came back, he had gone four months without defending the belt. If you got a chance to see him wrestle in September, you probably could tell that his elbow was not 100 percent healed.

Actually, it took a lot of courage for him to come back as soon as he did, and he wrestled well against the likes of **Lance Storm** and **Sabu** in some of his first matches back. However, we're not going to just give him a spot in the Top 10 because he's the ECW heavyweight champ. He'll have to keep wrestling well and, as all champions do, earn that spot.

As for Van Dam, well, he and Sabu earned their high ranking in the tag team ratings. They've been defending the ECW tag team title against the best teams the federation has to offer since they won it way back on June 27. But Van Dam has been quite lax when it comes to defending the ECW TV belt lately. If he is really the whole show in ECW—and he has claimed on numerous occasions that he is, he ought to defend both of his titles regularly. Until he shows a little more interest in that TV belt, his name won't appear in the Top 10. □

That's all for now! If you have any questions regarding our ratings or something you see on this page, we'd love to hear from you. Write to: "Ratings Analysis," c/o THE WRESTLER, Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034.

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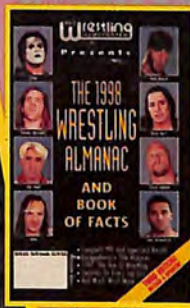
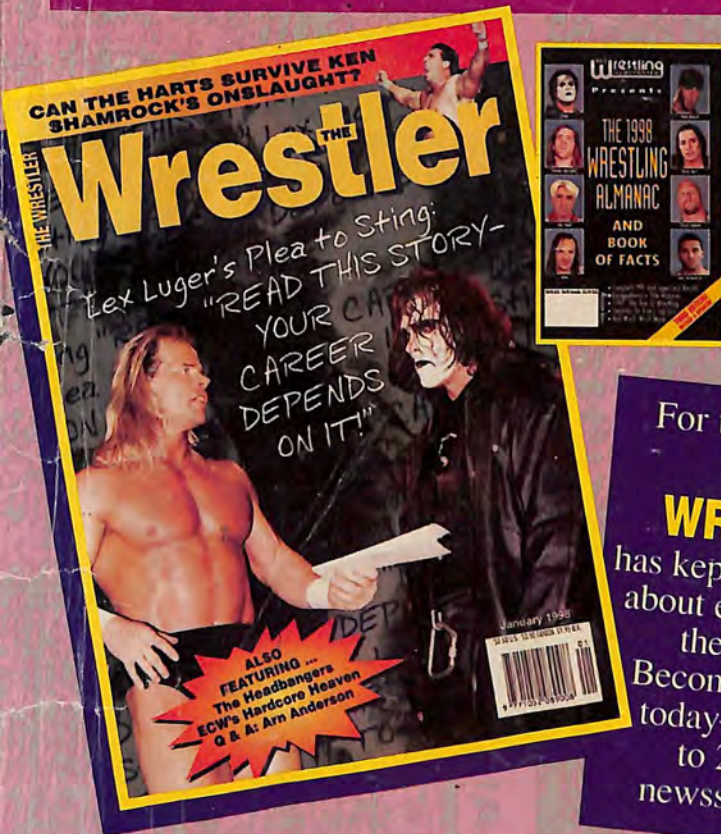
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